

January 8, 1938

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Collier's

THE NATIONAL WEEKLY



MOTHER'S A PITY

A SHORT STORY

BY HUGH WALPOLE



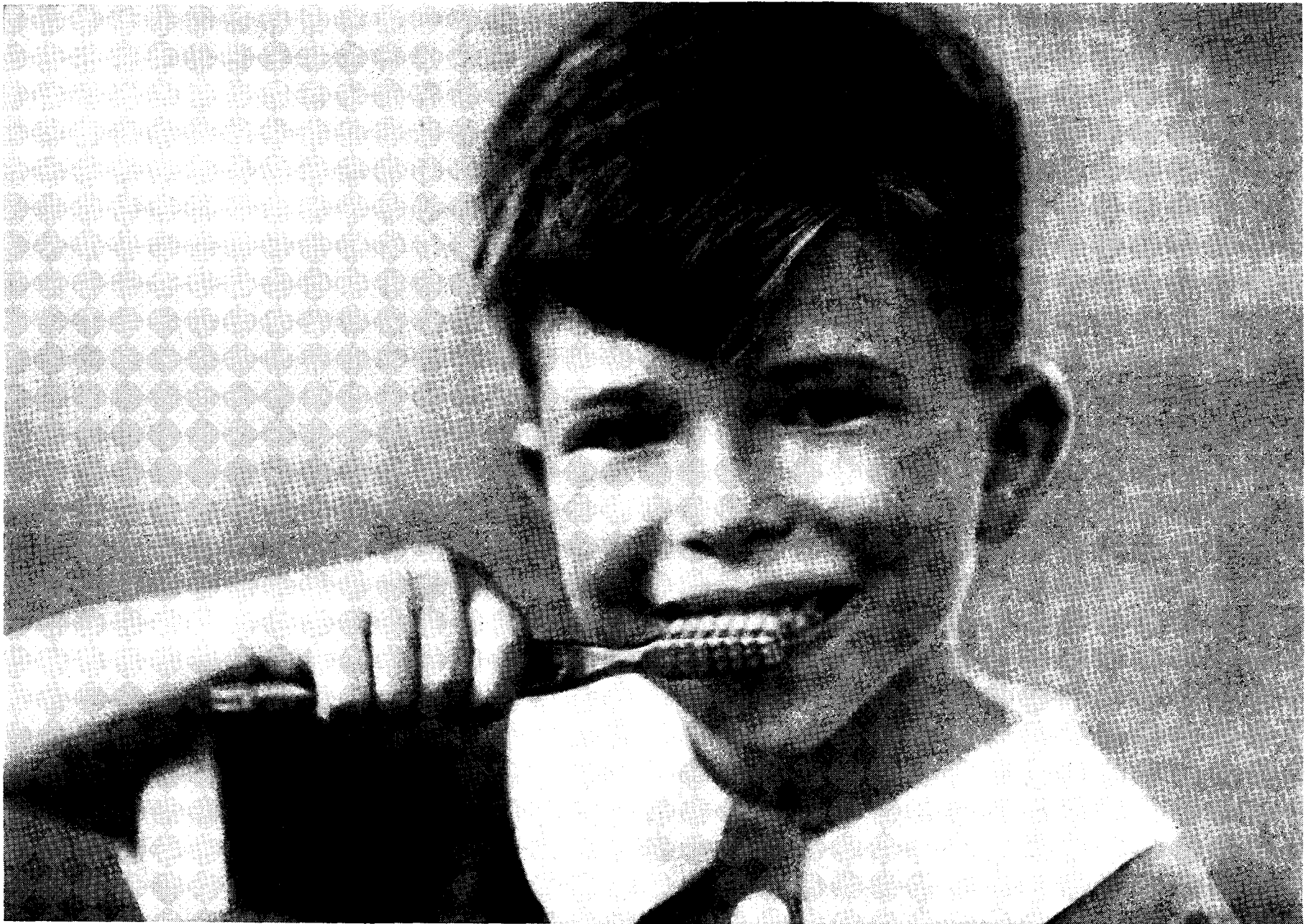
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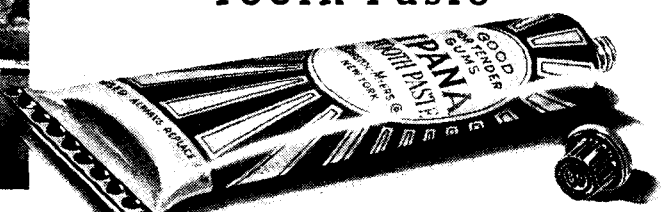
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Collier's

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Next Week

THE first American battalion in Spain was formed in a hurry and rushed into action. Some of the soldiers didn't know how to load a rifle and many died before they found out. There aren't many survivors left of the original Abraham Lincoln Battalion. But more Americans have gone to Spain, companies of them. Faces from Mississippi and Ohio and New York and California peer from Spanish barricades and Spanish trenches. They are good troops now, shock troops. They are rushed from front to front, in trucks, wherever the danger is. What are these men doing, facing death in a foreign land for no reward? From the front Martha Gellhorn sends a vivid story of the Americans fighting in Spain—"Men Without Medals."

THE thing that put Larry Martin on a level with Aristotle and Columbus had to do with horse opera. Hollywood said he was a genius, and Larry believed it. Pretty soon Hollywood changed its mind and said he was a bum. Time had caught up with Larry and given him the razberry on its way by. "Love, Action, Laughter," that's what Hollywood wanted and they didn't expect to get them from Larry. It was Judy Castle, as Budd Wilson Schulberg brilliantly demonstrates, who proved them wrong.

JUST south of Santa Monica, California, there is a large industry based on romance—orchid growing. It used to be the hobby of kings. Now it's a business, and increasingly an avocation for amateurs. In a highly colored article Frank J. Taylor lets you into "The Private Life of an Orchid."

IT WOULD be fantastic to suppose that the Trinipal broke her back on a sunken derelict in mid-Atlantic and sank just in order to teach Captain Wintermere a lesson. That was the effect it had, though, and the story of her passing is a fine example of human fortitude. It is told by Jacland Marmur in "Deep-Water Man."

OUR favorite magician's helper, the lovely and sharp-tongued Laroo, is constantly getting into unconventional scrapes. Next week you will find her in the British Museum, substituting for Cleopatra. "The Mummy That Walked," by Sax Rohmer, will make your hair rise.

ADDITIONAL delicacies by William MacHarg, Jonathan Latimer, Kyle Crichton, Octavus Roy Cohen, Freling Foster and others are offered for your approval. Help yourself.

This Week

SHORT STORIES

HUGH WALPOLE

Mother's a Pity. The brilliant story of a woman who didn't look dangerous. Page 9

JOHN HAWKINS

This is My Love Song. A band leader's romance. Page 14

T. MORRIS LONGSTRETH

Bat Out of Hell. Bobsled tactics. Page 24

HUGH WILEY

The Eye of Heaven. Detective James Lee gives a memory test. Page 27

THE SHORT SHORT STORY

With Permission, by D. L. Champion. Page 12

SERIAL STORIES

OCTAVUS ROY COHEN

East of Broadway, Part III. Start to fame. Page 18

JONATHAN LATIMER

A Queen's Ransom, Part VI. Imago's secret. Page 21

ARTICLES

RUTH CARSON

Dressed to Thrill. Clothes for a million. Page 13

GEORGE CREEL

The Battle Cry of Business. Tax anybody but me. Page 16

KYLE CRICHTON

Straight Shooter. The wonder boy of basketball. Page 20

QUENTIN REYNOLDS

Charming Young Man. David Niven crashes Hollywood. Page 23

FRELING FOSTER

Keep Up with the World. Odds and ends. Page 6

EDITORIAL

We Want Service. Page 50

COVER

ARTHUR CROUCH

Any Week

WE GOT a letter from Mr. R. M. Searles of Albany, New York, asking us to explain a cartoon in our November 27th issue. Before we could look it up a dozen similar demands arrived. We became pretty curious. More protests came in. Pretty soon we called up our lawyer, asking him to stand by. The populace was becoming threatening. But presently we got around to looking into the matter. It was, as you probably recall, a picture of a highly ornamental lady dining in an unnecessarily elaborate restaurant, and a speeding arrow had just narrowly missed the turkey dinner her waiter was presenting. The letter writers wanted to know what the joke was. In fact, they still want to know. Naturally, we're supposed to know.



THE furor reminds us that a fellow named Thorbald was ejected from the corridor in the Treasury Building in Washington last week for making what the guards considered too much unnecessary noise. All Mr. Thorbald was doing was laughing—a trifle immoderately, perhaps. "Anyway," said the guards, when Mr. Thorbald had convinced them that he meant no harm, "what were you laughing at?" Said Mr. Thorbald: "Hell, fellows, ain't this place supposed to be funny?"

NOW that we've explained that cartoon so deftly, we think we should tell you that a lady we know went to a very expensive gown shop to be fitted for—of all things—a gown. When the fitter had fitted her, our friend complimented her. "Huh," said the fitter, a slightly bitter-looking lady, "it's a good thing you got me, because this outfit would gyp you out of your step-ins if they could. As far as I know I'm the only halfway honest sap around this high-class robbers' roost."

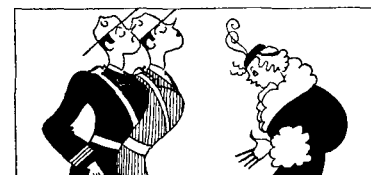
SO MANY patriots are running for office in Tennessee, says Mr. George O. McCahn of Knoxville, that platforms are at a premium. "There aren't enough new issues to go around," reports Mr. McCahn, "so the lads are digging up all the old ones they can remember. Three or four of them are squabbling over evolution, a subject which, if you recall, had us climbing trees a few years ago. But it's about the only issue you can take the anti side on

without offending votes. I just wondered what would happen, though, if the New Deal, looking around for more corners to brighten, enfranchised the downtrodden simians. My old man says he thought the monks had been voting all along."

OUR weekly class in magazine writing is directed at Miss Thulia Benbrow of Portland, Maine. She wants to know whether "people who write your serial stories supply their own plots or do you give them one to write around. Also," says Miss Benbrow, "who draws the pictures?" She tells us that if we will supply a plot and the necessary characters she will be very glad to write us a serial. If we had known it was as easy as that we'd be writing them ourselves instead of this. But, having put Miss Benbrow's query up to several editors and being thrown for huge losses, the best we can do for her is to tell her that an editor is a fellow who knows what he wants but doesn't know what it is.

MISS ALICE DAVIDSON of Brooklyn, New York, is indignant. She writes: "My faith in you is utterly destroyed. You have deserted the page-boy bob. Please, oh, please, for the sake of two beautiful long page-boy bobs, go back to the nice sleek hair, like the one on that gal in Collier's—the one who married the movie actor and turns out to be an heiress or something. My sister and I have followed you through every magazine and we always use your illustrations as an alibi against Mom, who keeps telling us, 'For heaven's sake, please have that mop of hair clipped.'"

MR. G. T. ENGLAND of Winnipeg, Canada, wants to know why we don't publish "a description of the steps which have been taken in a few places for the prevention of horrible and unnecessary noises."



AND Mrs. Gordon Wispray of Ottawa, Canada, wants to know "what became of the agreement whereby the United States was to protect Canada in the event of an invasion by an unnamed foreign power." Mrs. Wispray says that she asked the authorities in Ottawa about it and "was treated with silent contempt."

BETTER than horrible noises.

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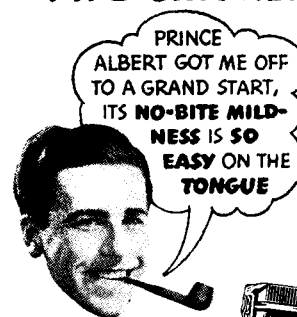
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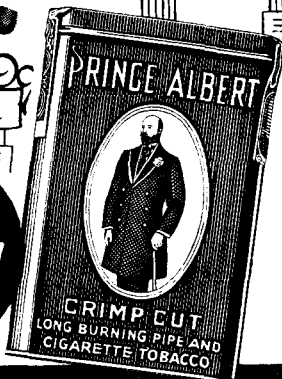
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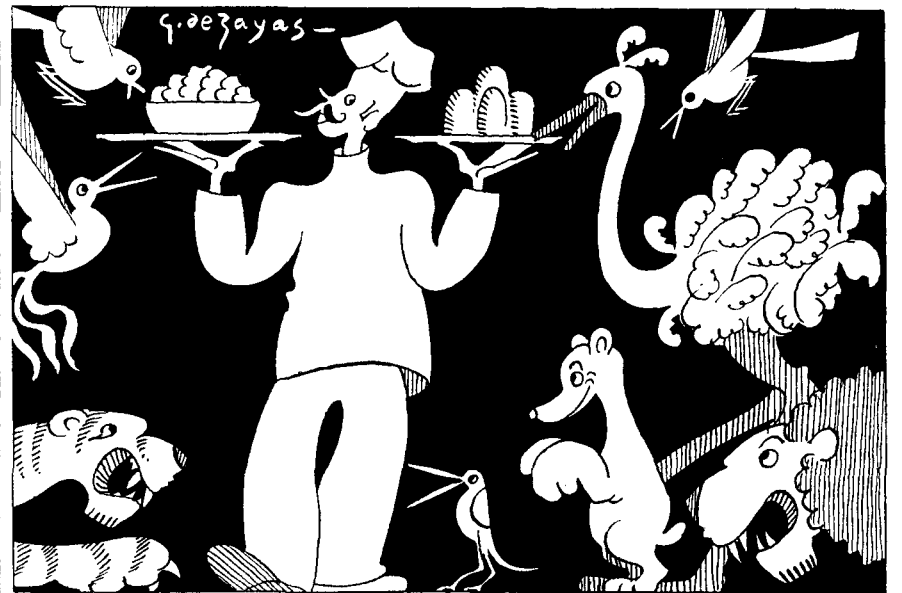


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SMOOTHER "MAKIN'S" CIGARETTES, TOO

PRINCE ALBERT THE NATIONAL JOY SMOKE



KEEP UP WITH THE WORLD

By Freling Foster

Nearly all animals in zoos live on diets that are partly or wholly composed of substitutes for their natural foods. As examples, some honey bears enjoy beef stews, and anteaters usually like chopped meat, eggs and milk. The most fastidious feeders, however, are the birds. In the New York Zoological Park, ninety different kinds of foods must be purchased for them.

In the United States one infant under a year of age dies from an avoidable accident on an average of every four hours. Smothering by bed clothing is the chief cause of such deaths.

The Gilbert and Sullivan operas, as a group, have never been approached in popularity by any other theatrical productions. Since the first was presented in 1875, they have been staged throughout the world times without record. Some years ago, more than a hundred "Pinafore" companies toured the United States at one time. In the current season, American box-office receipts are again expected to approximate \$1,000,000.

One of the most unusual hobbies in this country, necessarily restricted to gentlemen with large estates, is collecting full-sized railroad engines and cars that have outlived their usefulness.

Some breeds of sheep develop four, five and even six horns; others, when left unsheared for two or three years, grow wool nearly four feet in length.—By Angelina Durante, New York City.

From 1885 to 1899 John Roberts of Manchester, England, occupied a position in billiards which few men have occupied in any game in history. During this time, he beat all comers in his favorite game of 24,000 points, even when giving handicaps of 10,000 to his opponents.

A champagne company in Epernay, France, has a cellar with 24 miles of storage racks, sections of which sometimes contain as many as 15,000,000 bottles of certain vintage years.—By Eleanor Newton, Pomona, California.

The highest priced advertising illustration, so far as is known, was an oil painting of Paderewski, made for a famous American piano manufacturer about twelve years ago. It was the work of Ignacio Zuloaga, the Spanish painter, and cost \$15,000.—By Joseph Roberts, Madison, Wisconsin.

According to a recent study of the songs of 35 species of birds recorded on the sound track of motion-picture film, many birds sing so rapidly that often a score of their notes sounds like a single one to the human ear. In one case, the film pictured 113 notes of a winter wren, but only five distinct ones could be heard by the scientists.—By Fred Ford, Passaic, New Jersey

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Of the ten essential rites that take place in the life of an orthodox Hindu, the oddest is Number Five, the religious ceremony performed when a child is first shown the moon.

How to get rid of an INFERIORITY COMPLEX

*A true story of a man who found that self-confidence
is not a matter of education or luck*

HE WAS GOOD in his job. No one denied that. But he felt inferior to his associates. Most of them were college men. He envied them the mysterious thing called "background."

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There are thousands of men today who lack the essential background so necessary for success in every field of life and who don't know where to turn for it. The cold stone front of a public library suggests groping among thousands of books. "What are the really great books?" you ask.

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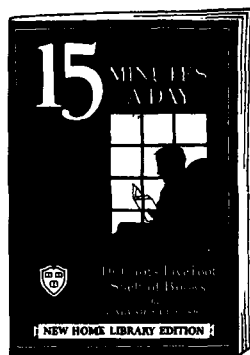
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*I don't see anything
smart about speeding....*

An illustration taken from The Travelers Insurance Company's eighth annual survey of automobile accidents and their causes. This booklet, covering the 1937 record, will be published as soon after the first of the year as the official estimates from the 48 states are available.

Copies of the booklet may be obtained within a few weeks from Travelers representatives.

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Mary Jones R.N.

ACCIDENT WARD

Mother's a Pity

By Hugh Walpole

ILLUSTRATED BY WALTER C. KLETT



OLD MRS. KINGHORN and her daughter were known as two of the greatest snobs in their particular London world. They were not thought the worse off for this, because snobbery, quite as rampant as it ever was in the days of the Egyptians, has now become like every other human trait—a medical and scientific problem. You are a snob, in short, because one of your glands is a little wrong. But one characteristic of the snob both Mrs. Kinghorn and her daughter had—namely, that they were quite unaware of being snobs at all.

Old Mrs. Kinghorn was, of course, hopeless. She was quite fantastically stupid. But Laura Kinghorn was so young and so pretty, so attractive, such good company, that it was indeed strange that she should not laugh at herself a little about this weakness. She did, like other modern young women, only laugh at herself in order that her friends should not laugh at her first. She created around her an atmosphere of badinage and mockery, but inside this iridescent circle she must herself remain immaculate and untouched.

A number of young men tried to break through the circle. They offered her their bodies, their debts, and their charming, aimless personalities; but Laura was definitely waiting, just as they used to wait in the old Anthony Trollope novels, for the Prince Charming to come along. But there was with her none of the false prudery of the Trollopian maiden. The Prince Charming must be rich, titled if possible, and able to win admiration in any circle. This was asking a great deal in these difficult days, for few men today have titles and money too; but as old Mrs. Kinghorn wanted for Laura just what Laura wanted, they made a pretty formidable body of attack.

Laura and her mother lived in a flat in Knightsbridge, and when I say "lived," they pushed and jostled, grumbled and complained in a space so small that one of the handsome modern cells in one of our handsome modern prisons would be a distinct improvement. It is difficult for any two people to live quietly together when there is no room for physical escape, and Laura and her mother

were certainly not quiet. To put it quite simply, Laura hated her mother. One of the principal reasons for Laura's immediate marriage was the intolerability of her mamma. She said so to everybody, and in the fashion of today she was perfectly frank.

"Mother's a horror," she would say, her enchanting little mouth growing for a moment hard in its outline, "a perfect horror. I can't tell you how frightful she is." And then in circles where it was impossible to be quite so direct: "Well, to be frank with you, Mother's a pity. I don't want to seem unpleasant about her and, after all, she is my mother, but she's a pity—that's the only way to put it."

On the other hand, old Mrs. Kinghorn never said a syllable against her daughter. One of the strangest things about the old lady was her complete satisfaction with herself—her appearance, her child, her home, everything about her. She had been undoubtedly the same from birth. There are some people in the world who, from the first instant of their appearance on this planet, are completely satisfied with everything. They have no complaints. A certain obtuseness prevents them from comprehending any outside criticism. They cannot conceive that anyone should not find them perfect. And yet, oddly enough, they are not really conceited, for conceit makes you restless, doubting, suspicious.

THESE happy, contented people can make the most of the very shabbiest circumstances, and so old Mrs. Kinghorn may be said to have done. She had married, when quite young, a dissolute rascal who had deceived her the first week of their marriage, treated her abominably, drunk himself to death; and yet, "her Richard" was, in Mrs. Kinghorn's eyes, a masterpiece of integrity, brilliance and devotion. She had, on the piano in the little flat, one of those photographs which flatter beyond all hope of redemption. Richard in his uniform, smiling out upon the world—a round-faced, kindly hero, resembling Bellini's St. George.

"Ah, my Richard," Mrs. Kinghorn would say, in her funny cracked voice.

"Oh, Mother, I'm so happy," she cried. "It's unbelievable. He's charming. The very second we saw each other we knew that it was inevitable. He's coming around to see you tomorrow morning"

"What he was to me no one will ever know." Which was perfectly true. There had been something so awful in their mutual relationship that it never could be told. She was the same about Laura, who was undoubtedly vain, spoiled and much stupider than she knew. To Mrs. Kinghorn her daughter was simply perfection. What the Kinghorns' circle wanted to know was whether the old lady had any idea at all of the things that her daughter said about her. She gave no sign.

Then there was Mrs. Kinghorn's appearance—a fantastic thing. She was a little bony woman with hair dyed a kind of angry sunset-red. Her face was painted crudely. She wore a lot of bad jewelry. She had a large nose and a large mouth. Her only good feature was her eyes, which were kindly, gentle and apparently at complete odds with all the rest of her face. They were not grotesque at all, but belonged, you would have thought, to quite another person. And when Mrs. Kinghorn was being especially foolish, impulsive, excited, these eyes would look at you gently, calmly, and with a beautiful sort of maternity about them. She dressed outrageously, and moved with a sort of jangling, jingling skittishness, like a puppet whose strings were being ineptly pulled.

She had, of course, a little dog—a fat, disordered Pekingese. It was altogether in character that this should be one of the most disagreeable little dogs ever invented. It snapped, coughed and choked, showed intense dislike of everybody—including its mistress—and had no redeeming quality at all except, perhaps (and here we emphasize once again the well-known truth of the strange resemblance between dogs and their owners), its large bulbous Chinese eyes, which held a sort of plaintive wonder, as though they said, "In other circumstances I might have been quite a different dog."

IT WAS, of course, a tragic thing, we must admit, for a lovely little fairylike creature to have a mother like this. Only a saint perhaps could have passed that test. Undoubtedly Laura did her very best. She saw herself as a really beautiful young example of this modern world, and when I say "beautiful" I mean not only physically. Laura thought she had a wonderful soul, and that her inner life was something so exquisite that she must keep it all to herself, giving out only once and again little hints like, "Ah, but if I were to tell you what I really feel about life." Or, "Music? I adore it. I wouldn't like you to know how it makes me feel." One of the chief things that she had against her mother was that the old lady responded to these hints so very little.

"Where were you last night, dearie?" Mrs. Kinghorn would ask.

"I went to the Queen's Hall with Alec."

"That was nice for you." Nice! When the Brahms' piano concerto had just torn Laura's beautiful soul to pieces. Had it been Brahms' piano concerto, or was it Schumann's? Anyway, that woman—what was her name?—began with H—who played too divinely! It was Laura's complaint also that her mother was so dreadfully contented. She never seemed to mind where she went, what she ate, the company she kept, whether she had had a good night or not, what sort of

noyol she got from the library, what picture she saw at the cinema, and, worst of all, what the weather was like.

On a morning when the rain simply pelted down outside the windows of the poky, horrid little flat, Laura would stamp and cry, "It's too beastly. It's always raining in this horrid town." And Mrs. Kinghorn would say quietly, "It's just the sort of weather to finish that nice book I'm in the middle of." And Laura would impatiently demand, "What book?" And Mrs. Kinghorn would say, "I can't remember its name, dear. I'll get it in a minute and see. I'm enjoying it ever so much."

IN FACT, Mrs. Kinghorn's basic trouble was her contentment with life. We all know that to be contented with life, even for a brief half hour in this modern, disordered world, is in the worst possible taste. The parallel that is often developed in our books and papers of our present likeness to the young Elizabethans fails just in this: that they, the more horrible life became, exulted in it the more strongly, while we find it the best possible manners to shiver at the unexpected opening of a door.

Now Mrs. Kinghorn shivered at nothing, and it was this that exasperated people so deeply. She had robust health, and that was irritating too, because it is very much better manners today to live on orange juice and have a rebellious digestion. The dreadful old woman could eat and drink practically anything, and it was a minor irritation to Laura that, although all her mother's teeth were false, they fitted to perfection. Everyone else she knew had constant dental trouble. I said at the beginning that Mrs. Kinghorn was extremely stupid, but even that was a little in question if anyone knew really what she was. She said herself in her odd, creaking voice that she was extremely stupid and had never had any education.

"There were eight of us," she would explain to anyone who cared to listen. "Six girls and two boys, and in those old days girls were considered less important than the rabbits that the farmer went up and shot. Of course, if you married well you were something, but it seemed as though I would never marry anybody. So I just stayed at home and did what I was told, or they thought I did."

Nobody listened very much to Mrs. Kinghorn's ramblings. After all, one listens to other people mainly in order not to hurt their feelings, and it was perfectly clear that Mrs. Kinghorn was talking entirely for her own satisfaction. She loved to reminisce, and often did so to the horrible Pekingese, which was called "So-So."

"Yes, dear. Father used to say to Mother, 'Can't you do anything about Agatha's looks? We'll never get her off while she's like this.' And they used to try every sort of fashion for me—doing my hair one way and then another, trying every sort of color on me. But it was no good; my mouth and nose were always past praying for."

Another thing that exasperated Laura was her mother's energy. All the young women of Laura's generation were busy either about sport, or business, or love or something; but they were busy in a very modern, sophisticated way. They had a single attitude, as though they said, "We have condescended to play

this silly game, but really it all means nothing, as you well know." To old Mrs. Kinghorn almost everything meant something. She was one of those abominable people who came down to breakfast with an air of triumph, as though she were going to be married that morning or had just come into a great fortune.

"I can't bear it," Laura would say. "Mother dear, I simply can't bear it. How can you be so hungry every morning?"

"It isn't that I'm hungry, dear," her mother would reply, "although I do really think breakfast is the best meal of the day. It's only—I don't know—I'm getting to the age, I suppose, when every morning that you wake up and find you are not dead you feel it's a sort of triumph over the Evil One."

"Mother, what nonsense. Women hate getting old."

"Beautiful women hate getting ugly," Mrs. Kinghorn said. "But I was never beautiful. It is after fifty that plain women come into their own—not that I'm coming into anything, but it's just pleasant to be alive."

So, with one thing and another, Laura decided, with all that modern frankness so admirable in this nonhypocritical world, that she detested her mother. Her own intimate circle were all aware of the fact, and considered it quite natural. Parents in any case were an embarrassment, but when you had an old freak for a mother as Laura had—an old freak who was always chattering, agitating her bad jewelry, saying the most foolish things—then it was hard indeed.

EVERYONE sympathized with Laura all the time: "Never mind, darling, you'll marry soon, and then you won't have to bother with her any more." That was true enough, but whom was Laura to marry? Almost everyone fell in love with her, but no one wanted to marry her. She was so lovely to look at that young men went quite dizzy when they saw her. But there was something hard in her somewhere. You couldn't imagine her being very tender to you when you had had a hard day in the city, or were suddenly conscious of that strange pain in the midriff which might mean so many alarming things. She was bossy, and today, even as a thousand years ago, real men don't like their wives to be bossy.

There came a day when Laura's best friend, Rose Perks, told her a little about this. Rose was married, and happily married. She felt, therefore, that she had some right to speak.

"Probably you'll never speak to me again, darling, and I should hate that, because I'm ever so fond of you. But you are so lovely and so sweet, really, that I hate that you should be always giving a false impression of yourself."

"How do you mean," said Laura, sharply, "a false impression?" When she spoke sharply she looked like a lovely little schoolmistress whose class was getting seriously out of hand.

"What I mean," said Rose, bravely, "is that you make men think that if they marry you, you will wear the trousers. Now that is not clever. Of course, every woman does in the end wear the trousers, but her husband must never realize it."

Laura was kind and polite, but in her heart decided that Rose had gone off



since her marriage, and she saw a little less of her and then a little less still; and that is very often the result when one friend gives good advice to another. Nevertheless she remembered and considered.

"If I were away from Mother," she thought, "I wouldn't feel that constant irritation. I must get a job or something."

But when she examined the question she found that there were two obstacles in the way. One of them was that, quite frankly, there was nothing that she could do. She talked cleverly, could discuss Proust, Surrealist painting and the



advantages of Communism; but she couldn't really *do* anything. She couldn't cook, she couldn't sew, she couldn't teach, she couldn't be a secretary, she couldn't breed dogs, she couldn't act, she couldn't sing. All this was, of course, the result of her mother's training. Her mother had never taught her to do anything. It was all her mother's fault.

But the second reason against going away was a very mysterious one—so mysterious that she didn't even investigate it very deeply. Although she detested her mother, life without her would seem strange: she had grown so used to her. When she thought of herself

in some little flat somewhere, with a girl friend, perhaps, there seemed to be all around her a deep, rather bitter silence. Everything her mother did irritated her, but those irritations had a sort of tonic quality. She said to her mother one evening, "Mother, I think I'll get a job and take a flat with Daisy Bridges or Harriet Cook."

"Yes, dear," said Mrs. Kinghorn, with a funny little sigh. "If you feel like that you must. I always want you to be perfectly free. What sort of job would you take?"

"Oh, there are heaps of jobs," said Laura, scornfully.

"Yes, dear," said her mother; "I know there are."

THEN quite suddenly, as the old novels used to say, "like a bolt from the blue," Laura fell in love. Not only that, but she fell in love with exactly the right person. Sir John Haddington was handsome and rich. He was a young man just down from Oxford. Every girl in the world wanted to marry him, and he well knew it. But at the first sight of Laura at an evening party somewhere, he fell at her feet. He proposed to her that same evening and she accepted without an instant's hesitation. When

"In a month's time that lady will be my mother-in-law," John said to her. "Would you mind telling me your name and why you are here?"

she came home about two in the morning, she woke up her mother, and, sitting on the old lady's bed, told her all about it. She was, although she didn't know it, once again the charming, silly, eager, affectionate child she had once been.

"Oh, Mother, I'm so happy! It's unbelievable. He's charming. The very
(Continued on page 32)



With Permission

By D. L. Champion

ILLUSTRATED BY HARRY MORSE MEYERS

A SHORT SHORT STORY COMPLETE ON THIS PAGE

THEY had come a long way together, these two. The Dictator sat behind his huge gleaming desk in the center of an enormous room. His face was lined and tired; but his little eyes glittered with relentless, fanatic purpose. He smiled fraternally at Stangel standing stiffly before him.

"Yes, my friend?" he said. "I regret you had to wait. What is it?"

"Excellency," said Stangel, "I have come to ask a favor."

The Dictator waved his hand and shrugged. "Why not?" he said. "We have done a lot together, my friend. Shoulder to shoulder, we have struggled upward. We have crushed the reactionaries. We have made a nation. More, we have made history. Yet you have never requested anything for yourself. A favor, my friend? Consider it granted."

Beneath the spell of the other's cadenced voice, Stangel almost forgot what he was about to ask. It was true enough. Together they had saved a nation; they had written history. The two of them—and

Gerich. His eyes clouded for a moment as he thought of Gerich. Vast as their country was, wide as were her borders, it seemed not large enough for both Gerich and himself. One of them would be dead now, were it not for the restraining, terrible hand of the Dictator.

He stopped himself from thinking as he became aware of the Dictator's inquiring eyes.

"This favor, Stangel?"

"Yes, Excellency. Of course, the favor. I intend to kill a man."

The Dictator's eyes burned searchingly into Stangel's. He sighed, said slowly, "This man, Stangel—this man you intend to kill is our country's enemy?"

"It is reported so, Excellency."

The Dictator raised his eyebrows. "It is not Gerich?"

"No!" said Stangel. "No, Excellency. It is not Gerich."

The Dictator smiled softly, and his gesturing hand touched the gun in his holster. "No," he said. "Of

He had seen her enter with a man. Stangel was not impulsive. He did not follow them and strike. Instead, he had waited and made his plans

course, it is not Gerich. You must not kill Gerich, Stangel. He must not kill you. I need you both. My right arm and my left. You must both live while I live. When I am gone, one of you will follow swiftly, I fear."

Stangel did not reply. He remained stiffly at attention, staring at the opposite wall. That last sentence was true talk indeed. If the Dictator should go, the succession would fall either to him or Gerich. The man who got the news first, who could take over the army, the police, would win. The first order of the new regime would be the death warrant of the loser.

"So you ask your favor, Stangel," the Dictator was saying. "You want to kill a man. It is a small favor, Stangel. You have done more for me. Go kill any man you wish. But not Gerich, Stangel. Remember that. Never Gerich. That is all."

Stangel bowed. With military stride he walked the great distance to the guarded doors.

IT WAS almost midnight when Stangel returned to his palatial suburban home. His family, the servants were already abed. From beneath the folds of his greatcoat he removed a long-barreled rifle. He walked to the gun room and with a steady hand replaced it in the rack. He made his way through the silent house to his study. From his pocket he took a powerful glass and dropped it in the desk drawer. Then with a deep sigh he sat down and filled his pipe.

Twenty minutes before, he had killed a man; and there was vast satisfaction in his heart. This had been no impersonal political murder. It had been purely emotional. It had reacted on his ego like a draft of Rhenish wine.

Furthermore—though it was not important, it was impossible that the deed should ever be traced to him, even by the dreaded bloodhounds of Gerich's secret police. He had kept his affair with Rosa Miller completely hidden. There was, after all, his wife to be considered, his family, his own exalted position in the nation.

It had not been easy, either. Wherever he went the spotlight beat down upon him; and Rosa, hailed as the greatest actress of the realm, enjoyed little private life. It had taken all his skill, all his talent for methodical planning, to keep their secret. But it had been done.

And now it was just as well. He had known a month ago that she was unfaithful to him. He had noticed the subtle change in her. Then one night he had watched her house from a distance. He had seen her enter with a man. Stangel was not impulsive. He did not follow them and strike. Instead, he waited and made his plans.

Now for three nights he had waited, waited in an empty factory building a quarter of a mile from Rosa's house. He had waited with the patience of a lynx, his eye glued to his glass, trained on Rosa's bedroom window. He had waited to see what he knew he must see—the figure of a man framed above that window sill. When he had seen it, he fired. It was as simple as that.

HE TURNED to the papers before him and worked on into the night. Not even murder could keep him from his Herculean tasks for the Dictator and the state. It was almost dawn when he heard the trampling footsteps on the veranda outside and a half score of gray-clad figures streamed into the hall. A young determined captain saluted him.

"Mr. Minister Stangel," he said, "I regret to inform you that you are under arrest."

Stangel regarded him tolerantly. He recognized the youth as one of Gerich's men. And in that moment he found time to admire the super-efficiency of his enemy. How on earth had Gerich linked him so swiftly with his crime?

"All right, Captain," he said. "I shall go with you. But this shall cost you a severe reprimand. The Dictator will be angered at the news of my arrest."

The young captain looked at him oddly. "The Dictator?" he said slowly. "The Dictator is dead. He was shot by Rosa Miller, the actress, two hours ago. She has already been executed. The Minister Gerich has taken over the government. It is on his orders that you are arrested."

As they took him from the house, Stangel tried vainly to think, to laugh or to weep. But he could not. There was one awful thought which occupied his whole brain, which drove all else out. He knew he would never reach the police barracks alive.

Soft daytime dress
made to please the
American woman; and
rough straw bag and
hat, all sure hits

FROM the stage a parade of girls swings round and out along the giant runway that angles through the ballroom. Down and around and across the runway they come—and as they spin out from the stage like the peeling from an apple they disclose girls in white sweaters and plaid skirts and boys in sports clothes madly dancing the Big Apple. Swing low, swing high. Peel that apple! Cut that apple! Down the runway come the dancers, trucking, shagging, clapping, laughing. Peel that apple. Cut that apple. Snap those fingers. Praise Allah. It's young—it's new—it's fun—it's going places—it's American.

This is, believe it or not, a fashion show. Put on in the vast ballroom of the Waldorf Astoria in New York by the top fashion experts of the country, the Fashion Group, to a packed audience at fifteen dollars per. A pep show of clothes made in America. In the apple peeling are forty-eight girls in blue, America's favorite color, under brimmed hats, America's favorites. They wear forty-eight different dresses, each simple, becoming, inexpensive, the all-American dress, ready-to-wear. For mass production ready-to-wear clothes are America's contribution to fashion. These simple costumes are the reason American women are the best dressed in the world, for nowhere else is it possible to buy so much style, quality, comfort and gaiety at so low a price.

And they are full of the zest and youth of active life in America. For America is going places. Americans travel and play—not just a few, not just the wealthy. Everyone is on the go, vacationing, week-ending, seeing the world and all its corners. So the fashion experts give you American clothes that are travel clothes and sports clothes—young clothes built for action and quick changes, for many uses and much hard wear.

As they saunter across the stage and down the runway of the show—called Fashion Futures: American Edition—Collier's spots the high lights of what the active girl will wear this year, southbound, cruising in the spring and summer—anywhere, everywhere.

Coats are still all lengths, boxy, fitted or flaring. But the leader for chic and usefulness is full length, straight in the front, slightly flared in the back. Wear it with matching skirt in a gray-blue, roughish tweed



A peasant dirndl as a play dress,
over matching shorts and brassiere

that goes with everything and is becoming to all climates besides. Make your hat of the same material, a beret or cone or skullcap that folds into nothing when you want to pack it. Take a flock of gay sweaters, and bright scarves for your neck, your waist or to bind your hair against the wind. And you are all set for plane, train or boat or the open road.

For an extra suit, consider one with fitted cardigan jacket (collarless) in harmonizing color, that can take your topcoat on chilly days without the bulkiness of an extra collar.

For dresses under your coat, or to play solo parts, there are three or four that will see you through any situation in the world.

The first is typically American, the soft daytime dress that is neither sporty nor too dressed up.

Illustrated is a version full of flattery and comfort. The fabric of the bodice itself ties softly into a bow at the neck, the sleeves are short and gently squared at the shoulder, the skirt is only slightly flaring. Wear it in printed or plain silk or (Continued on page 47)

This is My Love Song

By John Hawkins

ILLUSTRATED BY EARL CORDREY

Of a swing-band boy
who knew more about
music than of the
curious ways of love

YOU might have heard him somewhere along the line. Somewhere, say the Boardwalk, or the Pavilion, or the Dutchman's, or—but they were moving fast then. You might have been in the Pavilion the night it happened. Your fifty cents is as good as anyone's, and the beer is cool there. The music—well, Tony Montana was the music. Tony Montana, and his Seven Syncopators.

Gorny? Sure, but you don't start at the top. Tony knew that. You play the bushes and the tank stops first. You fight to keep your band together; to get the clucks to rehearse; to get a little advance billing. You battle with your agent, and with the manager of every joint you play in. You wear mess jackets made of something that feels like canvas and looks like the devil. You work and sweat and pray.

And then—when the big chance falls in your lap—your violin and sax men pick that day to blot up a quart of Scotch.

Tony tried, that night, and for a while it looked as though he might get away with it. He had the band working smoothly under his hand, had pulled the trombone up close to the amplifying mike to cover the strings. The intermission, with its fifteen-minute rest, was only three numbers away when Coon bounced out of his chair to take a hot sax break—four bars too soon.

Blinky, on the trombone, caught Tony's frantic signal, and he and Tony buried the blue wail of Coon's sax under a wash of moaning brass. Coon got the idea. He grinned glassily at Tony and tried to sit down, a good three feet from his chair.

Two music racks went down with him,

"Next time, Tony," she said quietly. Tony whispered, "Now! Carlisle's still there. Sing it, honey. You'll knock him cold"

and the second sax sobbed, stopped. The others went on trying, until the violin player leaned forward and said: "That's hangin' right in there, Coon ol' boy, that's..."

The microphone, placed there to pick up the muted reeds, caught his words, magnified them a hundred times and sent them smashing across the hall as the music died in a flurried discordance.

TONY MONTANA let his trumpet fall away from his lips and pivoted around to face the floor. He might still have saved it, but he couldn't see that. A word then, a bright trick phrase, and the crowd might have thought the whole thing was staged. Even a laugh would have helped.

But you don't laugh, not with the gray taste of ashes in your mouth, not when your dreams crash around your heels. Not when you're young. And Tony Montana was young.

Young and slim and dark, and he didn't look like a band leader. His hair hadn't the glossy, glued-in-place sheen that you identify with the men who wave batons, but tumbled, instead, across his forehead. His face was lean, a good-boned leanness, and there were tight lines about his mouth. He had no lightness, no easy smile.

He waited while laughter and the quick sound of voices replaced the *shuf-shuf* of moving feet. Waited, his eyes not on the crowd, but on the balcony booth and the man who was only a white-clad blur there. A man who watched and listened—and missed nothing. Tony knew that, knew it with a kind of savage sureness, for Carlisle booked the big shots. And big-time booking and mistakes do not go together.

Tony swallowed, spoke into the microphone, "Now we play a new..." His voice ran on, and he heard the rumble as the impersonal, iron-throated horns stamped his words with a giant ditto, took them to every corner of the Pavilion. "... Sharron O'Day on the vocal."

Carlisle hadn't moved. A cigarette lighter made a tiny golden fan of light in the balcony booth, light that struck upward across a bony face and was gone. Tony didn't have to see those features, he had but to close his eyes and Carlisle's face was there. Once he'd seen a magazine picture of Carlisle and never, in all the months that followed, had he forgotten. You don't forget when a thing matters so much it hurts.

SHARRON O'DAY was there, brushing past him as he turned away from the microphone. She was tall and slender and there were quick glinting lights in her hair. Her hand lay for just a second upon his arm and some of the stiffness, some of the smoky anger, seemed to leave him.

"Next time, Tony," she said quietly and smiled.

Tony whispered, "Now! Carlisle's still there. Sing it, honey! You'll knock him cold."

Music then, sweet and smooth. The pulse of the drums and the muted trombone forming a background for the reeds, and the soft wail of the strings. Blending, fading, and then the strong, clear chords from the piano. Not a new song, but the one they'd always planned.

This had been ahead of them for months, gloriously ahead of them. There were to have been spots, two of them, blazing down on the microphone where Sharron sang. Yes, they'd planned it all, even to the gown.

"You'll wear ivory," he had told her that night, "and you'll have the only light in the house. You'll knock Carlisle off his seat."

"We will," she had corrected. They'd laughed then, gulped scalding coffee,

and run for the train. She had clung to him in the swaying vestibule, and he had kissed her upturned lips. "Oh, Tony, I hope we're right. I hope it's soon."

"They can't stop us." He had been so sure, so very sure. "We'll get there, you and I, clear to the top. And the day we hit the big time we get married."

"Yes, Tony." Her lips had been warm against his, and then she'd turned to squeeze past a grinning porter. He had stayed there for a long time, listening to the singing warmth inside him, and the whispering clack of the wheels. . . .

But it hadn't been soon. And there were no spots, only the glare of footlights in a tin trough, lights that put deep shadows under her cheekbones. And two of the band were drunk. . . .

Only the song and her voice were right. Blue and slow and throbbing. An ageless song, as old as time, as new as tomorrow. She lent a husky longing to the words, a hint of sadness. Her head was tipped back; her eyes were closed. And the dancers bunched in front of the platform to watch and listen.

Tony was there, the thin, muted voice of his trumpet weaving a smoky magic around the words, touching them with depth and color. Together, as they had planned, voice and trumpet selling a song, selling themselves to Carlisle.

THEN, final crashing chords, the last lingering word of the song, and the quick splatter of applause. Sharron turned, smiling. "We tried anyway, and maybe we're in," she whispered breathlessly. Tony nodded, and she squeezed his hand lightly and was gone.

Tony turned to the band. "Thanks," he said harshly; "that was one you didn't mess up." No one answered. Coon kept his head down, his eyes on the floor. Tony said: "This one, and then intermission. Hit it."

Carlisle's booth was empty when they finished the number. Tony was looking up at the balcony when Blinky touched his arm.

"He left just when we started, Tony. I guess..."

"That's it, Blinky; we go on playin' the bushes for coffee money." Tony moved toward the stairs, and then went back to say, "Thanks for the try; it helped."

"Don't be a dope."

The crowd was swirling around the tables when Tony crossed the floor, went through a small door and along a dusty hall.

The worst of it was coming now; he had to tell Sharron that they'd missed. That they'd go on making long jumps in day coaches to save Pullman fare, that they'd go on playing in joints, and eating at lunch counters. That their dreams had gone sour. . . .

Sharron came to meet him behind outstretched hands. She was smiling, her eyes shining mistily. "Tony!"

He caught her hands. "We flopped, we went full length. He walked out on us and—"

He saw the tall man behind her then. Recognized the horn-rimmed glasses, the shaggy brows, the gray eyes.

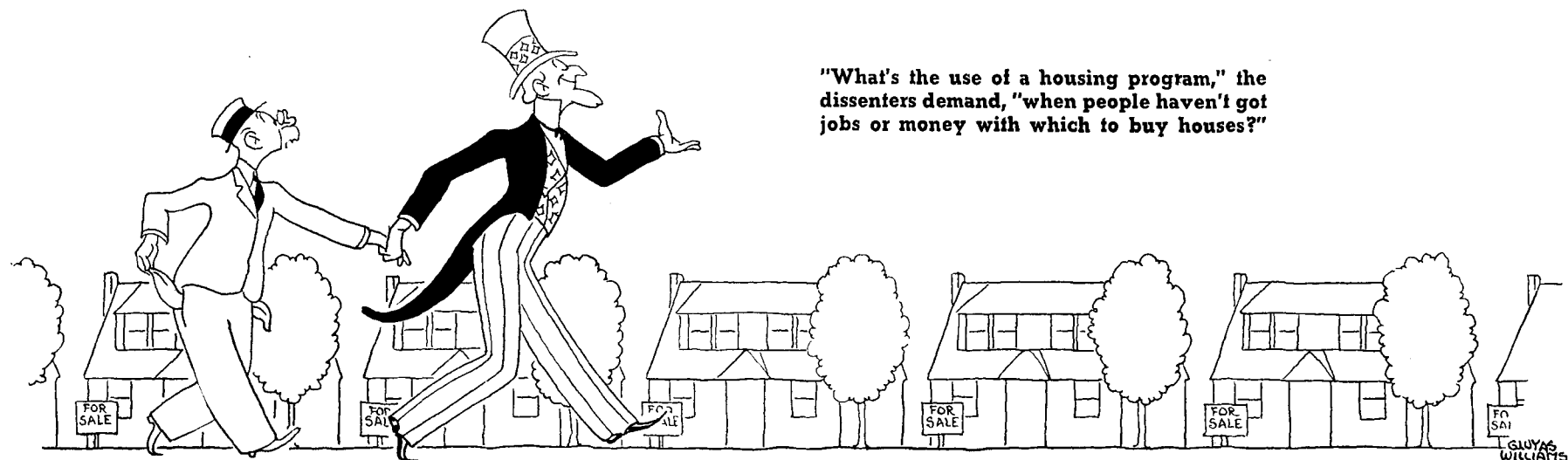
Carlisle said, "Hello, Montana."

"Not Montana." A wan smile pulled at Tony's lips. "That's for the customers. The name's Woolhauser, but you can't bill that. You know, I saw you leave up there and I thought—"

Tony stopped, for he knew what was
(Continued on page 38)

"Your contract," he said.
"This calls for the same
money Benny Marks paid
you, so you won't lose"





The Battle Cry of Business

By George Creel

Storming the New Deal heights, with fire in their eyes and a tight hold on their purses, business and industry are bombarding the Administration's tax program. Statistics whizz through the air. Bombs of propaganda explode in your face. The armistice is not yet in sight

THE loudest noise in the land today is the anguished outcry of finance and industry against the Administration's tax policy. Unless cushions are provided, it is claimed, business will not have a sound bone left in its poor, broken body.

"Cushions, indeed!" comes the answering sneer of the New Dealers. "What they really want is feather beds."

It is this bitter and momentous dispute that Congress will be called on to settle some time in February or March, for, although a House committee has been plugging away since early November, the preparation of a tax bill is necessarily slow and tedious. On one side will be the pressing need for Treasury receipts to meet government demands, and on the other is the insistence of businessmen that present levies constitute crushing and unbearable burdens. Back of dollars and cents, however, is also a clash between those who hold that taxes should be viewed solely from the standpoint of revenue and those who contend that taxes can and must be used as means to social ends.

A battle of magnitude, and what gives an unexpected uncertainty to the outcome is that the New Dealers will not present a solid front against repeals or revisions. Many defections have taken place, and even in those inner circles that revolve directly around the Great White Father there are whispers that it is no longer wise to brand business as Public Enemy Number One.

No less an Administration leader than Jesse Jones, chairman of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, champions the provision of tax "cushions," and D. C. Roper, Secretary of Commerce, is another who has taken his stand with the Modificationist faction of the New Deal as opposed to those who may be called Unreconstructed. A lessening demand for farm products, due to a decline in the purchasing power of city people, is also not without its influence on Henry Wallace, and all the indications are that the Secretary of Agri-

culture, while still a trifle coy, will take his stand with the revisionists.

Joseph P. Kennedy, chairman of the Maritime Commission and exceedingly close to the President, is on record with the flat statement that "you can't get money to run the government by tactics which penalize enterprise and hit at the entire business structure from credits to working capital."

Senator Key Pittman, raising his voice in behalf of small corporations, remarks, "When you shoot at a bandit, you don't shoot into the crowd." Senator Joseph O'Mahoney, continuing the insurgent mood of the court fight, has declared for tax modifications as "the one sure means of giving an impetus to employment."

Pat Harrison, chairman of the powerful Finance Committee of the Senate, will also be found among those urging ameliorative changes. True, this was not always his position, but now that he has been re-elected for another six-year term, the big Mississippian's innate conservatism is showing itself, and no one is more insistent on tax revisions that will "restore confidence to business." And as if to sound a louder note of independence, the senator avers that "the Administration must appreciate that honest differences of opinion may arise as to policies but that it cannot permit these differences to inspire insinuations and charges of party disloyalty." At his back, and yelling him on, will

stand Byrd of Virginia, George of Georgia, Gerry of Rhode Island and Bailey of North Carolina. A vocal lot, with never a lisp or stutter among them.

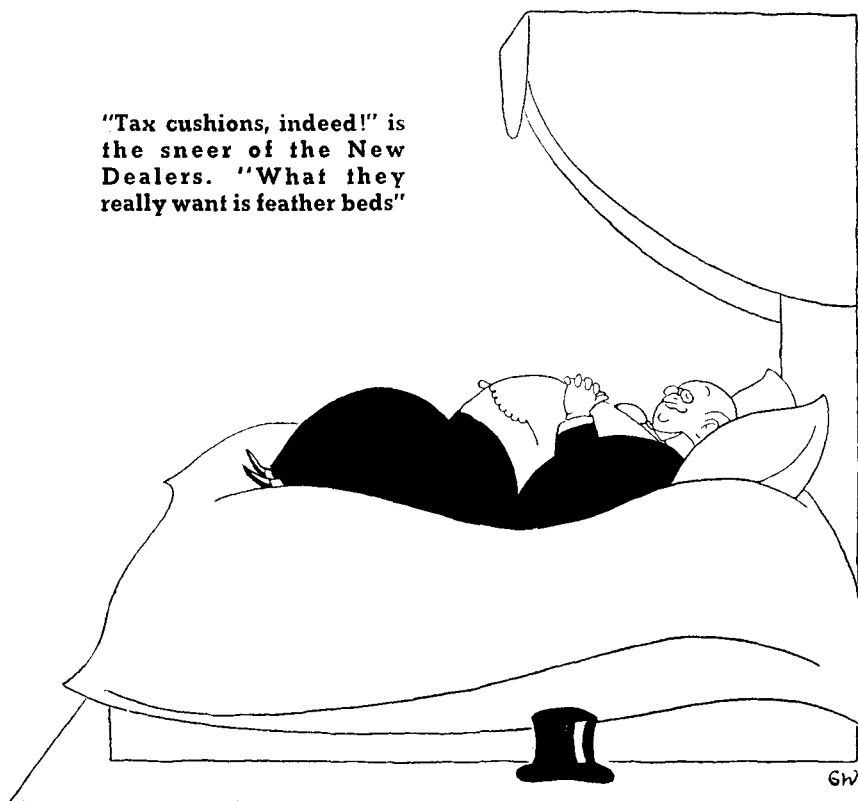
In the House, John O'Connor, chairman of the Rules Committee and long a New Dealer under duress, will lead the fight for radical changes in the tax structure. "What's the point of a housing program," asks the New Yorker, "when people haven't got jobs or money with which to buy houses? Employment needs stimulus, and the one way is to take the fear out of private capital."

Most significant of all, however, is the attitude of Fred M. Vinson, the very able chairman of the special tax subcommittee of the House that has been holding hearings for the last two months. In repeated statements the gentleman from Kentucky has said flatly that present tax laws do contain injustices and inequities that hurt and hamper business, and that the general sentiment of his group is in favor of sensible revisions. All of which would seem to justify the assumption that Mr. Vinson and his associates have heard from the country, and that popular sentiment, as they assess it, is for a more conciliatory and co-operative attitude toward business.

What will be the White House stand? Grim and unyielding if the following release from the press department of the Democratic National Committee may be accepted as an expression of Administration viewpoint: "The business buccaneers whose reckless practices left them adrift and almost hopeless in 1929 are taking the position that unless the government re-establishes them on board their pirate craft, with a charter to resume their predatory policies, the whole country is going to the devil, and that Roosevelt is responsible."

Notwithstanding this blast, it is no secret that the President has been deeply disturbed by the down-swing, and is in a mood to quit making fists at business and business leaders. From his own mouth has come the suggestion that it might be well to lift the tax on capital

"Tax cushions, indeed!" is the sneer of the New Dealers. "What they really want is feather beds"



gains derived from the construction industry, and the pronouncements of Secretary Morgenthau indicate that the Administration will not oppose tax changes that do not affect revenue too materially. Whether Mr. Roosevelt will go so far as to enfold the United States Chamber of Commerce in a fraternal embrace remains to be seen, but signs are not wanting to prove that his attitude has softened considerably.

Plugging the Loopholes

And how will the battle be waged? Well, when the debate does open, not the least powerful drive will be that against tax-free securities and tax-free job holders. According to late estimates, the amount of tax-exempt securities—national, state and local—runs around sixty billions, and, as many congressmen may be depended on to point out, the burden of that exemption is borne by the part of the population who lack the money to buy such protection from the income tax collector.

The escape of state employees from the federal income tax, and of federal employees from income taxes in the several states, is also a festering bitterness. Senators and representatives themselves may have no large enthusiasm for doing away with these exemptions, but from the people as a whole is coming an angry and increasing demand to know why federal and state job holders should constitute themselves a privileged class.

It may also be accepted as a certainty that Senator LaFollette will again bring forward his proposals for broadening the base of the income tax. Under his plan, exemptions would be lowered from \$1,000 to \$800 in the case of single persons, and from \$2,500 to \$2,000 for married persons with no dependents. The same proportionate reduction in exemption would be carried right on up through the higher brackets. Out of the \$110,000,000 that would be raised, Senator LaFollette estimates that about 8.2 per cent would come from new income taxpayers, and the balance from present payees who are now escaping by means of exemptions that pull them down into a lower bracket. Along with the lowering of exemptions, he urges an increase of surtaxes in the brackets between \$3,000 and \$50,000, figuring \$248,000,000 as the amount of increased revenue.

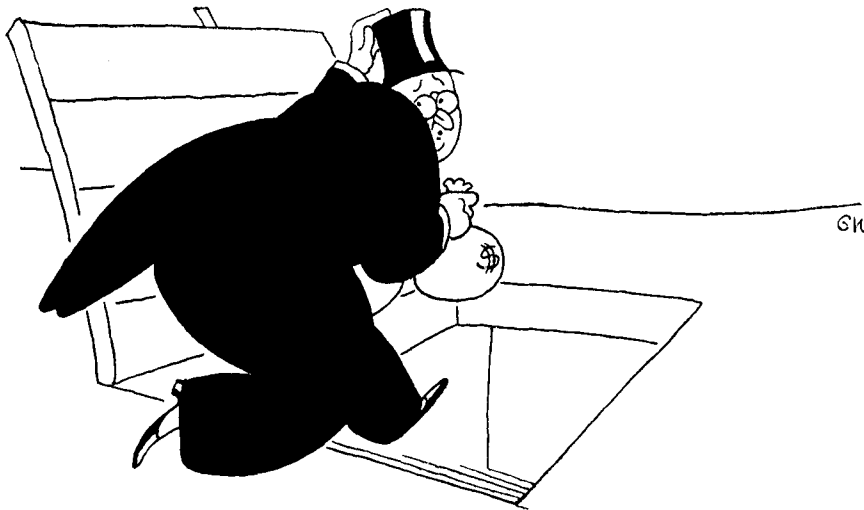
Senator LaFollette's amendments will doubtless fail, as before, for the demagogic will howl about the cruelty of asking \$8 or \$20 a year from small incomes, and the reactionaries will also use this pretext to protect the higher brackets from heavier taxes.

Should Surpluses Be Taxed?

Where the battle will wage fiercest, however, is over the tax on undistributed corporate earnings, that very frank effort of the New Deal to cure alleged inequities and to increase purchasing power by compelling the payment of dividends. It is a law with the direct thrust of a spear, for if a corporation decides to retain earnings instead of handing them out to stockholders, the government steps in and levies a tax that runs from 14.44 per cent on a net income of \$2,000 all the way up to 32.42 per cent on one of \$10,000,000.

More than any other levy, it has aroused a passion of protest. The United States Chamber of Commerce, the National Association of Manufacturers, the National Industrial Conference Board, and every other large organization of employing interests, have taken the field for what they assert to be a "life-and-death struggle."

A chief complaint is the failure of the law to give consideration to debt-ridden corporations. A case in point is that of



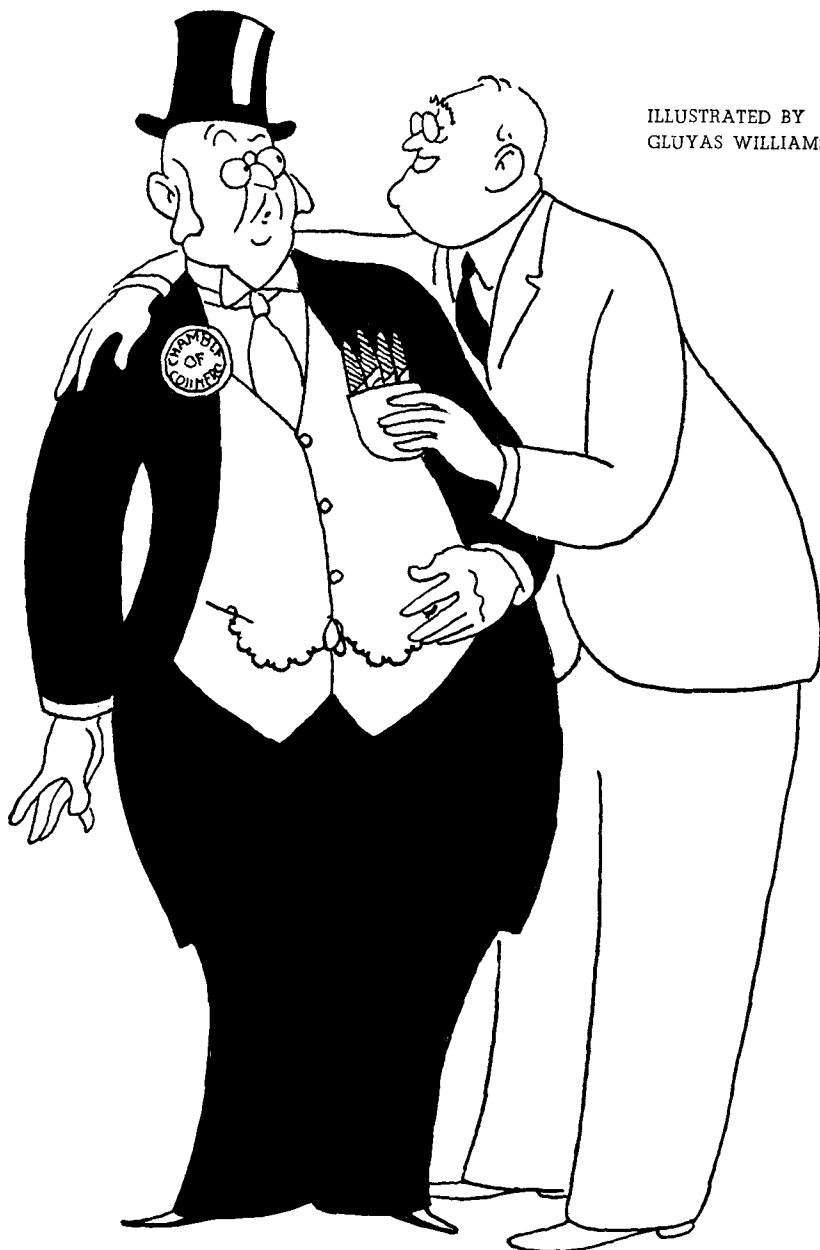
The fact is that capital believes the government's policy is harsh and repressive, and has taken to the storm cellar

a company with a bond issue of \$100,000 maturing on December 1, 1937. Ending the year with a net income of \$100,000, it uses the money to retire the bonds. This done, and the treasury bare, the corporation must dig up \$17,662 to pay the tax imposed for its failure to distribute the \$100,000 in dividends rather than employing it for debt payment.

And what about improvements and plant expansion? Although a corporation plans a building campaign essential to its continued growth and prosperity, net earnings must be shoveled out

in dividends or else the tax comes down with all the sharpness of a sword. On what philosophy has America been built if not that of plowed-back earnings? And yet the law now says to every businessman, "Plow back earnings at your peril!"

Together with restrictions on development, the growth of small enterprises is limited and a brake put on the drive against unemployment. "Little fellows," unable to float new security issues or to obtain banking credit, are placed at a competitive disadvantage as compared



ILLUSTRATED BY
GLUYAS WILLIAMS

GLUYAS
WILLIAMS

Whether Mr. Roosevelt will go so far as to enfold the U. S. Chamber of Commerce in a fraternal embrace remains to be seen

with "big fellows" able to get money at going rates. With business in handcuffs and leg chains, barred from expansion by a law that strips a corporation of its working capital, what chance is there for the creation of new jobs?

Another point made by business is that the surtax works exceptional hardships and inequities on corporations that, because of impaired capital, are forbidden either by charter or by state statute to distribute dividends. Overriding these prohibitions, the law orders the corporation to pay out anyway, regardless of its financial condition. And this in face of the fact that the Reconstruction Finance Corporation requires each industrial corporation to which it makes a loan to get its consent before making any disbursement of dividends. And the Interstate Commerce Commission has actually ordered railroads with weak financial structures to build up sinking funds.

To continue the list of complaints, what of those cases in which some or all of current earnings are tied up in inventories, accounts receivable, physical equipment, or in other forms not available for cash dividends? Is it just to tax undistributable earnings? And is there either justice or sense in the provision that only those dividends received by stockholders within the taxable year may be allowed as a dividends-paid credit? It means that dividends must be declared and distributed while the year's earnings are still unknown, and anybody but a "starry-eyed idealist" knows what a task it is to close books and determine dividend policy before the year's experience has even been completed.

Invitation to Depression

Last but not least, what about reserves? Can there be any denial of the soundness of a policy that puts aside a certain amount from current earnings in fat years to tide over lean years? Is it not obvious that the surtax, by making it impossible for a corporation to build up reserves, undermines the whole business structure and is actually an invitation to downward spirals?

And what is an adequate reserve? Certainly the Congresses of other years did not know. The tax law of 1917, for example, levied an additional ten per cent upon the amount remaining undistributed, six months after the end of each calendar or fiscal year, of the total net income of every corporation, joint-stock company or association, or insurance company, received during the year. Instead of being mandatory, however, the tax did not apply to "that portion of such undistributed net income which is actually invested and employed in the business or is retained for employment in the reasonable requirements of the business."

This was the tax policy of government with respect to undistributed earnings until 1936, Congress putting it up to the Commissioner of Internal Revenue to decide whether a surplus was or was not "beyond the reasonable needs of the business." And the law remained a dead letter, for no commissioner ever felt competent to determine just what were "reasonable needs." It will ever be so, business insists, for what is reasonable for one corporation may be unreasonable for another.

Back of the drive against the various provisions of the tax is a deep bitterness against the whole tax structure. When the President came forward with his proposal for the Undistributed Profits tax, assurance was given that it would supplant the Excess Profits tax, the Capital Stock tax and the Corporate Income tax. This view was accepted by the House, but when the bill went into conference, the Senate not only retained the

(Continued on page 30)

I L L U S T R A T E D B Y J O N W H I T C O M B



Honey had done herself a slight injustice. She wasn't the best singer in the world, but she was very close to being the loudest

The Story Thus Far:

HITCHHIKING toward New York City (following the collapse of the Florida night club where they have been employed), Eddie Lawson, a dancer, and Tiny Martin, a musician, stop in the small Southern town of Karnak. There, in need of money, both go to work in the local theater. And there, in their boardinghouse, they meet Karnak's most attractive girl: Linda Waring.

Meanwhile, drama has been shaping in New York. Morton L. Bemis, a lawyer, has come to the city from the Middle West to find a young man named Oscar Blunt, who, known only to Bemis, is the owner of stock which is worth more than a quarter of a million dollars. Bemis has learned that Blunt is a dancer—that he works under the name of Eddie Lawson! Unfortunately the lawyer has encountered one Andrew North, a racketeer, told North his secret—and been murdered by the scoundrel, who sees great possibilities in the situation. . . . Bemis out of the way, North calls on Vernon Gregg, master of ceremonies at a Broadway night spot (and Eddie Lawson's bitter enemy), and requests him, orders him, to send Eddie to him, if he sees him. While all this has been going on, Eddie has organized a charity show in Karnak—a show which, due to his skillful coaching, is a brilliant success. The bright star is a girl whose singing and dancing delight and astonish everyone: Linda Waring. The girl has talent, undeniably. Eddie thinks that she might even make good on Broadway. But what would Karnak say if, accepting Eddie's suggestion, she accompanied Mr. Lawson and Mr. Martin to the big city and went to work under Mr. Lawson's management? No, she could not possibly do that. Karnak is, after all, only a small town, but it is Linda's home and the village gossips would make it impossi-

ble for her ever to return there to live in case she should fail to make good. But Eddie has another idea. He presents it to Linda—suggests that they be married (becoming husband and wife "in name only") and, having eliminated any possibility of gossip, face Manhattan's pers-streaming down her face, accepts the suggestion. "Quit it!" Eddie barks. "This isn't any time to cry." Linda's lips tremble. "Isn't it?" she exclaims. "I reckon you don't understand girls, Eddie. They're entitled to get some emotion out of becoming engaged!"

III

EDDIE LAWSON turned from the mirror of his ancient oak dresser. He said, "For the first time in my life. Tiny—I'm about to be a real headliner."

"Hmph! And I suppose nobody will notice Linda?"

"Maybe you're right," Eddie grinned. "I'm worried about you, Tiny. It's been at least ten minutes since you called me a damned fool."

"I'm exhausted. But I'm still thinking it."

"Marriage," said Eddie, "is a great thing when all else fails."

"I know. . . . Look, Eddie—are you being entirely fair to the kid?"

"To Linda? Gosh, yes. It's a business setup, and she knows it. In New York we find out whether I'm right or wrong. She clicks or flops. Either way, it'll be definite. Then we can cook up a nice, quiet divorce and we'll all be happy."

"Romantic lad, aren't you?"

"Romance has nothing to do with this."

"And dumb."

"Meaning what, Mister Martin?"

"Meaning nothing you would understand." Tiny opened the door and listened. "They're tuning up the melodeon, Eddie. Two to one they play the Misere."

"If I had your sense of humor, Tiny—

I would be a saxophone player, too. Let's go."

They walked slowly down the stairway. The downstairs hall, the sitting room, the parlor and the porch were jammed with family friends: men in whites and linens and seersuckers; the female contingent gay in summer dresses. They were all curious and all interested. "I've got 'em with me at the start, Tiny," whispered Eddie. "But what'll I do for an encore?"

The hallway and parlor had been decorated lavishly with smilax, and innumerable vases had been filled with all the white roses available. The scene was simple and rustic and unpretentious. "It gets me," confessed Eddie. "Like a well-staged second act."

Everybody who was anybody in Karnak was there: friends of the older Warrings, schoolday companions of Linda's, young folks and children who had learned to like Eddie during his stay in this somnolent Southern town. The minister came forward to greet the bridegroom, and to shake his hand, and to inquire whether he wished the word "obey" excluded from the ceremony. "It doesn't matter," smiled Eddie. "I'm sure she wouldn't, anyway."

Eddie was fidgety. "Got the jitters," he confided in a low voice to his gargantuan friend. "A wedding must be awful if you really take it seriously."

Someone signaled from the hallway and a tall girl seated herself at the melodeon and commenced to play Lohengrin's Wedding March. "There's your cue," said Tiny. "You're about to go overboard."

SILENCE fell over the gathering. Linda walked downstairs slowly, and her uncle took her arm. Eddie smiled at her and wondered why he was so frightened—and so surprised.

Until that moment he had regarded Linda with clinical eyes. He knew that she was small and pretty, and different from any other girl he had ever seen—but until this moment he had translated those virtues into terms of Broadway success. Now he was conscious of her as a woman, regardless of talent. He found himself marveling at her daintiness and at her fragile beauty; he discerned a demureness which was a part of Linda herself—and he noticed that her cheeks were pale and that she did not unveil her eyes as she came forward to join him under the little arbor of smilax and white roses.

She wore no veil and carried no flowers. Her dress was not a bridal costume: it was a simple white organdie, yet she gave it significance and dignity. She looked neither right nor left, nor at Eddie. She stood beside him, the top of her ash-blond head reaching only to his shoulder so that Eddie, who was of average height, felt very tall. He heard a woman crying and he wondered why.

He heard a gentle masculine voice . . . saying words that meant less than nothing . . . and then saying . . . "Do you, Linda, take this man, Edward, to be your lawfully wedded husband—to love and to cherish . . ." and her soft, clear answer, "I do," and there were more words and a nudge from Tiny, and Eddie's own voice saying, "I do," surprised him, too. Then the minister again, ". . . and so I now pronounce you man and wife . . ."

EDDIE and his wife stood together on the platform of a train speeding northward. Eddie wanted to laugh and to be gay, but somehow he couldn't. Maybe it was because there were tears in Linda's eyes, perhaps because she seemed so alone and so infinitesimal. Impulsively, he reached down and took both her hands between his, and forced her to look up at him.

He said, "Scared, Linda?"

"Yes."

"Sorry you decided to come with me?"

"No."

"Keep that pretty little chin up. It isn't going to be so terrible."

She made a valiant effort to smile. "You'd never understand, Eddie."

"Sure I would. You've lived all your life in Karnak. Now you've left it—and all your friends. You're going with a strange man to a strange place. No wonder you feel funny."

She said, "I knew you didn't understand."

"I understand this: That you'll feel heaps better in the morning. Just think . . . tomorrow afternoon: New York. Broadway. You can wake in the morning, and say to yourself, 'Tonight, I'll be there.'"

SHE turned away suddenly and pushed against the heavy door. Two passengers came down the aisle and smiled broadly as some rice spilled from the folds of her dress. Eddie followed her and they joined Tiny in his section. The conductors came through for their tickets, and then they were silent—no one of them knowing quite what to say.

It was Tiny who broke the silence. "Maybe," he suggested, "I might put my sax together and play a funeral march for you two."

"I wouldn't put it beyond you, Tiny," Eddie replied.

"What's the sadness about, anyway? I don't understand it—or maybe I'm just stupid."

"I wouldn't argue that point with you, Tiny."

"How about you, Mrs. Lawson?"

She looked up, startled—and Tiny said hastily: "There I go again—always leading with my right."

Eddie shivered. "This ought to be fun," he declared. "Or am I wrong?"

Linda nodded. "Of course it should." Her voice broke. "Oh, Eddie . . ."

He looked down at her. She had turned her face away and was staring through the window at the rushing landscape: at the cypress swamps and the gray moss and the dank undergrowth which she had always known. Tiny said, "I'll be drifting back for a smoke," and waddled awkwardly down the aisle to the end of the car.

They were silent for a long, long time—for miles and miles—and then Eddie said gently, "It isn't like we expected, is it, Linda?"

She shook her head.

"I understand just how you feel," stated Eddie. "I suppose a wedding is a wedding—no matter if it is just business."

Still she did not answer, and he went on: "You're going to be happy, Sugar. And successful. And you'll have fun. All your stage fright will be gone by tomorrow. I promise."

She turned to him then, and spoke softly. "I reckon I'm more of a little fool than I thought, Eddie. I sho' am sorry."

"Sorry—nothing. It's natural—and sweet."

"I'll be good from now on."

"Attagal!"

Tiny rejoined them after a while and they conversed more normally. They watched a sunset of purple and gold, and a dusk which was richly gray. A dining-car steward came through with the first call for dinner. Eddie and Linda ate lightly—though Tiny's colossal appetite was not to be denied. And at nine-thirty Eddie said, "You're played out, aren't you, Linda?" and she nodded and Eddie asked the porter to make up Lower 7, which he did with meticulous thoroughness.

Eddie and Tiny wandered back to the club car and smoked. They talked a little—but not much—about things of definite unimportance. At ten-thirty they returned to their Pullman. The



Eddie and Tiny donned aprons and made general nuisances of themselves

curtains were drawn over Lower 7, and the two men talked in whispers.

And then they looked at the curtains of Lower 7, and at each other. Eddie spread his hands in a hopeless gesture. "Linda's crying," he said ruefully. "Can you imagine that?"

Tiny looked steadily at his friend.

He said, "I sure can, Eddie—I sure can."

EDDIE gestured toward the state of New Jersey. He declaimed, "The time has come, the Walrus said . . ."

"You sho' make yo'self clear, Eddie," responded Linda.

"On yonder horizon, Southern Gal, is the hustling, bustling city of Elizabeth. Beyond lies Newark, not to mention Hackensack. Then—New York. The hour has arrived for good little girls to refresh themselves so that they can slap Gotham right in the eye."

Linda reached for her bag. The depression of her bridal night had vanished. She was bright and gay and happy and her mood had communicated itself to the others. "It's like I imagine champagne would be," she said. "I'm thrilled."

"You should be," stated Eddie. "Not many girls have had the experience of being introduced to the big city by so famous a person as myself. Now run along and make yourself beautiful."

They watched her walk down the aisle

of the Pullman, and Eddie said gratefully, "She sure snapped out of it."

"Uh-huh. She's a mighty game kid."

"You talk as though she'd taken a beating."

"Well, I wouldn't say that being married to you was anything to sing songs about."

Eddie grinned affectionately and touched his huge friend on the knee. He said, "Keep the padlock on, Tiny."

"About what?"

"About Linda and me being married."

"Can't I even tell Danny and Honey Reardon?"

"No can tell anybody. Too much danger of the story getting around, and if folks knew Linda was my wife—they'd pay less attention to what I said about her."

"If possible," grunted Mr. Martin.

Eddie's face grew serious. "And that's the other thing I'm worried about."

"Worried about two things at once. Your brain must be expanding, Mister Lawson."

"I wonder if I've gone too strong with Linda. About myself, I mean."

"I haven't been eavesdropping, Eddie. So suppose you explain."

"We-e-ell, you know how it is when a lad from Broadway hits the sticks. He lays it on thick. Maybe I've been doing it. I'm afraid Linda thinks I'm considerable punkins hereabouts."

(Continued on page 41)

Straight Shooter

By Kyle Crichton

He's a trick shot. Given a basketball and the use of either hand for a second or so and he'll astonish you. He's galloping toward an all-time record. In other words, this guy's good

BACK in the days of the pterodactyls and the dinosaurs there was a basketball team known as the Buffalo Germans which went on a tour from coast to coast and returned undefeated. It was followed by the famous Troy (N. Y.) team, which had the same success. Later still the New York Nationals mopped up on the boys in the hinterlands, losing only one game to the Hazleton (Pa.) Professionals. Still later Nat Holman and his New York Celtics befuddled the gentlemen of Nebraska and way-points. The scores mounted to such figures as 108-9, 95-12, 87-19, the barrage ceasing on some nights only when the scorer became weary and banged the bell for the end of the fray before collapse overtook him.

Last season a Stanford University team headed by one Angelo (Hank) Luisetti made the tour in reverse and administered shellackings to anybody with enough temerity to step on the court. The peak of the journey was reached at Madison Square Garden in New York when Mr. Claire Bee's celebrated Long Island University team, after having previously won forty-three straight games, was run practically out into the middle of Eighth Avenue. The moral seems to be that basketball is now truly a national sport, with pot-shot forwards and swivel-hipped guards as likely to be met in the Ozarks of Arkansas as in the salt beds of Utah.

"The best player that ever hit the Garden," said the New York sports writers of Hank Luisetti, and added that by the Garden they meant the best they had seen around the Big Town in years. But there were loyal citizens prepared to ascend to heaven still thinking that the St. John's team of Brooklyn ten years back was the ultimate in college basketball and there were individuals from Pittsburgh and the West who would trade you blow for blow on the merits of Chuck Hyatt, the old Pitt star. However, it was generally agreed that the young Italian from Frisco was altogether remarkable.

When the Scoring Spree Started

While Hank was still at Galileo High School in San Francisco, the news was being bruited around about him. At that time he was almost exclusively a floor-worker; if he scored five or six points a game, he was doing well. When John Bunn, the Stanford coach, finally corralled him, the scoring spree began. Here is how the Luisetti figures jumped after the kid received orders to get that apple up there and stop hanging onto it:

Freshman year — 18 games — 305 points.

Sophomore year — 29 games — 416 points.

Junior year—27 games—410 points.

An idea of what Luisetti is like may be given by saying that the previous unofficial college scoring record was held by Robert H. Maney, of Lehigh, who popped in 632 points during the three

seasons of 1928-29-30. The four-year record is still held by Glen Roberts of Emory-Henry College in Virginia who rang up 1,531 points during the years of 1932-35 inclusive. Unless something disastrous happens to Luisetti, people around Palo Alto will gladly give you ten to one that Hank busts the Roberts' mark during the present season.

Seven Games—108 Points

Stanford's midwinter tour last year had them playing the following games:

Central Missouri State Teachers College, Warrensburg (Stanford, 51; Warrensburg, 31; Luisetti scored 21 points).

Temple, Philadelphia (Stanford, 45; Temple, 38; Luisetti scored 14 points).

Long Island University, New York (Stanford, 45; Long Island 31; Luisetti scored 15 points).

Canisius, Buffalo (Stanford, 39; Canisius, 29; Luisetti scored 6 points in 10 minutes of play).

Western Reserve, Cleveland (Stanford, 67, Western Reserve, 27; Luisetti scored 26 points in the first half and retired).

Hamline, St. Paul (Stanford, 58; Hamline, 26; Luisetti scored 16 points).

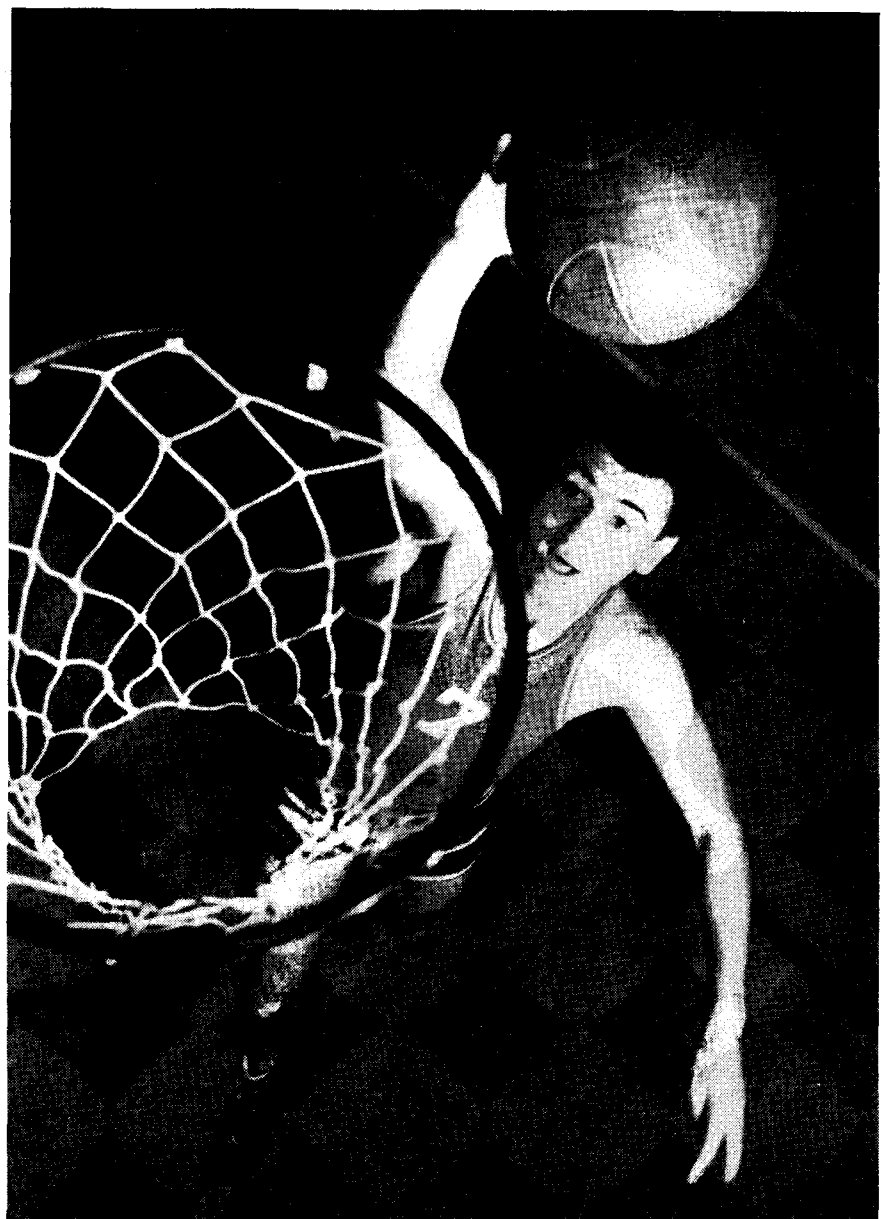
Montana State (Stanford, 66; M. S., 28; Luisetti got 10 points in ten minutes).

In discussing the trip, John Bunn, the Stanford coach, analyzed the different styles of play now current in this great land. "Generally speaking," said Bunn, "in the Rocky Mountain section, Utah and Montana, it is all offense. Those games up there are decided by scores like 65-63. In the Middle West things are decidedly more conservative and defense predominates. A team that scores thirty points in that competition is really turning on the heat. Around New York the marvelous thing is the ball-handling. The way those boys at City College pass that pill around is something to see. I'm afraid they sometimes carry it to extremes, but it's tough beating a team like that.

"The only exception around New York is the Long Island bunch. If you allow those birds to get set, they'll pop in shots from anywhere. We covered them even when they were a mile back and I think that's how we beat them. In the Pacific Coast conference we have things pretty well rounded out between offense and defense and the quality of ball being played now is very high. I've never seen any teams from the South but you're apt to run into a great team anywhere."

The game they may remember Hank Luisetti by at Stanford is the battle with Southern California in his sophomore year. With eleven minutes to play Southern California was ahead 15 points. At this point Hank turned on the steam and rang up 24 points, Stanford finally winning by 51-47. The kid is six feet three and now weighs around 185, and the experts say that basketball has never seen his equal for pulling off

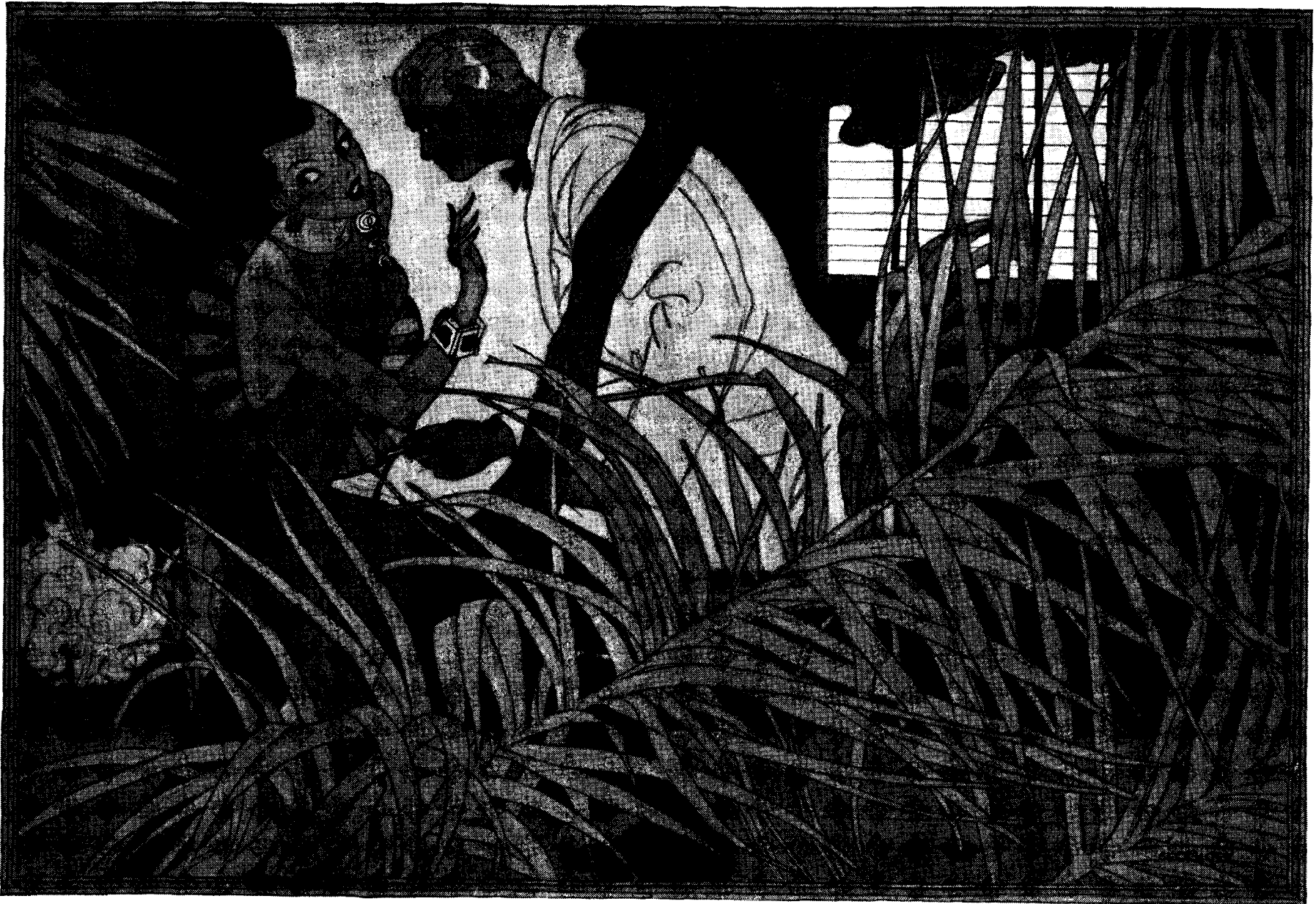
(Continued on page 35)



PHOTOGRAPHED FOR COLLIER'S BY GABRIEL MOULIN



Angelo "Hank" Luisetti, Stanford's high-scoring flash, whose success formula is a simple one: You carry 'em down and pop 'em in



"Is something wrong?" Crane said. "Yes." Her voice sank to a whisper. "Someone threatens me"

A Queen's Ransom

By Jonathan Latimer

The Story Thus Far:

WHO, using red ink, signing himself "The Eye," and demanding the payment of fifty thousand dollars, is sending young Penn Essex threatening letters? At Essex's Florida estate, William Crane, a detective, and his assistant, Thomas O'Rourke, are at work on the case when, to the delight of the sensational newspapers, Camelia Essex, Penn's sister, is kidnaped!

A few hours later, Essex receives another letter—it is pinned to the pillow in his bedroom; and Crane is similarly honored with a message, likewise printed in red ink, which warns him to drop the investigation. . . . Among those who flit in and out of Essex's house (an armed camp) are: Major Eastcomb, Essex's confidential adviser (who hopes to marry Camelia); Tony Lamphier, who is also in love with Essex's sister; Eve Boucher and her husband, Gregory; Sybil Langley, an actress; Dawn Day, a night-club entertainer; and Imago Paraguay, once a spy in Cuba, now a professional dancer.

For a time, Crane keeps an eye on Roland Tortoni, owner of a night club and gambling house, to whom Essex (whose sole income is from a trust fund and who is in financial difficulties) owes twenty-five thousand dollars which he refuses to pay. But Tortoni is murdered, and so passes out of the picture. Another suspect is Count di Gregario, a Cuban revolutionist with whom Camelia has become infatuated; shadowed day and night by two of Crane's confidantes, Doc Williams and Eddie Burns, he is living in a Miami hotel.

Believing that Essex is withholding something of importance, Crane searches his rooms. He learns that Dawn Day (one of the guests)

has access to Essex's suite from her bedroom; and he finds a bottle of red ink! . . . With Essex, Crane and O'Rourke present, Major Eastcomb accuses Boucher of trying to win Camelia's affections. The major explains that Boucher is on the verge of losing his estate in Virginia, that he is planning to divorce his wife and marry Camelia—if the girl will have him. "A fifty-thousand-dollar ransom would help, wouldn't it, Boucher?" Eastcomb concludes. As O'Rourke steps between the two furious men, Craig, the butler, enters. "The reporters outside," he announces, "would like to ask you about this, Mr. Essex." He hands Essex a Miami newspaper.

Essex passes the paper on to Crane, points to an advertisement. Crane reads: "Money is ready. Please contact. Essex."

VI

SO YOU did decide to pay the ransom," Crane said, passing the paper to O'Rourke.

Essex said, "We put ads in all the Miami papers."

"It's going to be interesting when The Eye contacts you," Crane said. "I've never yet heard of a foolproof way of receiving a ransom. Are you going to let the police in on it?"

"I don't know," said Essex.

"Certainly we are." Major Eastcomb was pouring himself a large drink of whisky. "Do you think we'd take a chance of your bungling this, too?"

Crane ignored him. "What are you going to tell the reporters?" he asked Essex.

"That I'm ready to pay the ransom."

"I think it would be a good idea to say you intend to keep any messages received from the kidnapers secret until Camelia is returned."

"Yes, I guess it would."

O'Rourke said, "I'd tell 'em the police aren't going to be called in, even if it isn't true."

"Sort of lull The Eye's suspicions," said Lamphier.

"He's too smart for that," said Crane. "But it can't hurt to try."

Essex said, "Maybe we really should keep the police out."

"I won't authorize the use of the money unless the police have full knowledge," said Major Eastcomb.

"I guess the police are in, then," said Crane.

O'Rourke said, "I think they'll be reasonable. In New York when the Frachetti boy was snatched, they didn't even try to trail the guy who took out the ransom."

"I'll speak to the district attorney," said the major. "He'll see the police don't jeopardize Camelia's safety."

Essex said, "We can probably arrange to have them notified the instant the ransom is paid."

"We better hold off until Camelia is safe," said Tony Lamphier.

"We better hold off until we get an idea how The Eye wants the ransom paid," said Crane.

"I'll see the reporters," Essex said.

"Let's join the ladies," suggested Boucher.

CHAIRS, feet scraped the red tile floor. A servingman, Carlos, peeped in at them through the swinging door to the butler's pantry. Their movement toward the door made cigarette smoke swirl over their heads. O'Rourke waited for Crane.

"I thought we were going to have a free-for-all," he said.

"The major's certainly out for trouble."

"He's eager t' put the snatching on someone."

"Yes . . . very."

"I'd like to slug him once."

"You might as well," Crane said.

"Pretty nearly everyone has."

They walked toward the patio, and O'Rourke asked, "What's the program?"

"We got to find 'Buster' Brown." Crane told O'Rourke about Essex's and Miss Day's bedroom and how he had seen Brown with a bottle of red ink. "We have to find out what he was doing with it."

"Questioning him ought to be fun," O'Rourke said.

Over the patio, in a navy blue sky, hung a three-quarter moon. The milky light outlined shapes, made everything appear black and white, as in a photographic negative. The wind was sweet and lazy; it sighed through the palms and spread the odors of jasmine.

Crane pulled a metal chair over to Imago Paraguay. "May I?"

"Of course."

He sat down beside her. "It is hard to believe in crime on a night like this."

Her face was exquisite in the moonlight. "Not for me." Her skin was as pale, as perfectly textured as marble.

"Is something wrong?"

The moonlight was cream-colored on the beach, chromium bright on the crests of breaking waves. The surf made a gentle whoosh at intervals, like a big animal exhaling. The murmur of other voices filled the patio.

"Yes." Her voice sank to a whisper.

"Someone threatens me."

"Who?"

"I think it best not to tell you."

He gave her a cigarette. "Is it di Gregario?"

"I will not tell you." In taking the cigarette her fingers brushed his.

"What's he up to now?" He held a match in his cupped hands, leaned toward her. "I thought he was afraid enough of you to try to do something to you." The flame from the match showed her scarlet lips, the deep blue shadows

under her eyes, the hollows in her cheeks.

"I ha-ave told you nothing." She steadied his hands with hers, lit the cigarette. "I may later this evening, but now . . ."

"I don't understand."

"I will do this with you." When she stood up he was surprised, as usual, at her height. "I will, if I do not say otherwise, give you some valuable information tonight."

He stood up. "When?"

"At two o'clock, say?"

"All right. But where?"

For an instant her hand touched his, pressed it slightly. "You may come to my room." She detached her hand, moved away, leaving a faint odor of sandalwood.

O'ROURKE met Crane upstairs, in the hall outside Brown's room. It was quite warm and O'Rourke wiped sweat off his forehead with a silk handkerchief.

"I could use some of that Dutch beer," he said.

"We need something stronger than that," said Crane. His knuckles hesitated three inches from the wood. "Where do you want the body sent?"

"Nuts." O'Rourke took his revolver from his underarm holster, tucked it in his belt. "I'll bump him if he gets tough."

Crane knocked, his knuckles making a hollow sound on the door. "Yeah?" said a hoarse voice.

Crane shoved open the door.

Chester Brown was reading on his bed. The light falling on his face outlined a zigzag scar on his right cheek illuminated clasped hands tattooed on

his hairy chest. He wore black underwear shorts. His legs were very hairy.

"Whacha want?" he asked Crane.

"We want to ask a few questions."

He didn't seem particularly surprised to see them. His muscles bunched, unbunched as he got to a sitting position. "You're the dicks, ain't you?" His right ear looked as though it had been badly frozen.

"Yeah," Crane said.

O'Rourke closed the door.

"Well, I got nothing to tell you."

"Wait until we ask you somethin'," O'Rourke said.

"I'll talk when I please." He swung his feet to the floor. "I got a belly full of cops."

"Sit down," said O'Rourke.

Brown sank back on the bed, his eyes on O'Rourke's gun.

"We aren't cops," Crane said. "We're working for Mr. Essex." He sat in a straight chair. "If you want to keep working for him you'll try to help us."

"If you want to keep healthy, you'll try," said O'Rourke.

Sullenly, Brown said, "What d'you want to know?"

Crane leaned forward in the chair so he could move quickly. "What do you know about The Eye?"

Brown scowled at O'Rourke. "Put that rod down and I'll show you what I know."

"Look," said Crane. "We want some help."

"You pick a bad way to ask for it."

"We were afraid you'd cool us."

"I may."

O'Rourke said, "No, you won't."

"Be reasonable," Crane said. "We're trying to get Miss Essex back. You're in favor of that, aren't you?"

"Yeah, she's a nice broad," Brown said. "It's swell of you to say so," O'Rourke said.

Brown half rose from the bed.

"Sit down," said Crane. "I got a notion to throw you in the can."

"Tell this mick to lay off," said Brown. O'Rourke asked, "What have you got on him, Bill?"

"The notes. He's the only person who could have stuck the note on Essex's bed in the Walpern."

"Oh, yeah?" said Brown.

"Yeah."

BROWN leaned forward on the bed. "How about that second note?" His hands were on his knees. "I was in Richmond when that came."

"You got a pal," said O'Rourke.

"Probably that cute little French maid," Crane nodded as though everything was becoming clear to him. "That Céleste?"

"The hell!" Scar tissue on Brown's knuckles was the color of pork rind. "Just because I date a broad don't mean we're planning a kidnaping."

"It doesn't look good."

Brown's scowl was replaced by alarm. "You guys don't really think I been writing those notes?"

"We don't know," said O'Rourke.

"Your attitude," said Crane. "You don't seem to want to co-operate."

"You got me all wrong. It's the way you come busting in here . . . a guy'll stand just so much."

"Stumble-bums!" said O'Rourke. "Tough until you're in a corner."

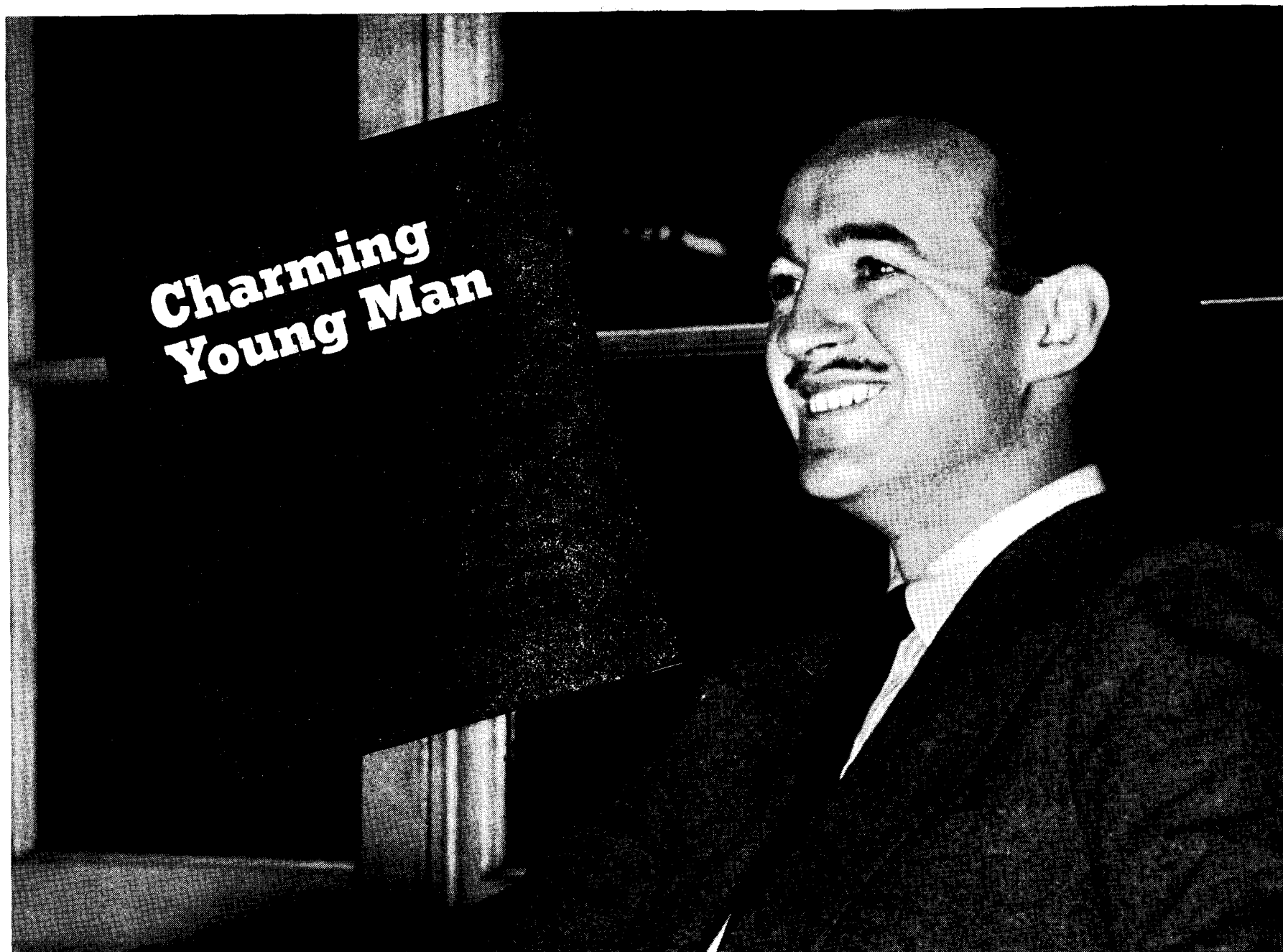
Brown's eyes glowed, but he took it. These guys wouldn't be so wise, he thought, unless they figured they had

(Continued on page 44)

ILLUSTRATED BY
HARRY BECKHOFF



"What do you know about The Eye?" Crane said. Brown scowled at O'Rourke. "Put that rod down and I'll show you what I know," he said



IT WAS the worst examination paper they had ever seen. Absolutely the worst. "Listen, Niven," they told him sternly. "Give up any idea you have about entering the Navy. The Army—yes. The Navy—no. An important part of Navy life involves the aiming of big guns, and the finding of a ship's exact position. Both of these are done by mathematics. Evidently you are not a natural mathematician. Out of a possible 300 your mark in this examination is eight."

"That isn't very good," Niven said humbly.

"You are right," they said crisply. "That isn't very good."

And that's how David Niven broke into Hollywood. Not right away, mind you. Having had to give up the British Navy, he went to Sandhurst, Britain's West Point, and became an officer and a gentleman. From there it was only a hop, skip and a scotch to Canada and then of course came New York and Cuba and one day he woke up with a hangover on a Japanese freighter bound for San Francisco. After that Hollywood was easy, even though the only acting he had ever done was to pretend that he wasn't hungry when he really was. It's a press agent's dream—this story of Niven's—and if he hadn't told it to me himself I wouldn't believe it either.

Midway through the story I said gently to him, "Sometimes I write fiction, David, but if I ever wrote some of these tales you're telling me they'd say I was crazy. Now leave the fiction out of it and give me the facts, because the story is good enough without faking."

He shook his head gloomily, "I know. I know it all sounds screwy but honestly you can check up on everything I say, and if you find one thing is wrong, why, kill the whole story."

So we ordered another beer and this young man who recently made such a hit in *The Prisoner of Zenda* went on with his story and afterward I checked up as much as I could and much to my surprise the story stood up on its own legs. For several years young Niven was a bum, trading his smile and his charm for ham and eggs, not because he was constitutionally fitted for the part but because he couldn't get himself a job. Now, of course, he's all set. He's Goldwyn's pet; he's box office, and to escape the ultimate stardom which looms he'll have to break both legs, both arms and his accent.

The Bookmakers' Delight

After the Navy people waved him away so emphatically he went, as we have said, to Sandhurst. When he was commissioned he hurried to Malta, a British base plumb in the middle of the Mediterranean.

"It was great fun being an officer and a gentleman," he says a bit ruefully. "I mean it was fun if you could afford it. I really couldn't afford it."

When Niven looks back from the hoary pinnacle of his twenty-eight years one man looms above the horizon of memory, a gentleman named Mike Trubshawe who was also a second lieutenant in the Highland Light Infantry. He was, in fact, the oldest second lieutenant in the British Army. He had too

much fun in the Army ever to take advancement in rank seriously, so his superior officers reciprocally decided not to take him seriously.

It was hot at Malta. It was especially hot when you had to drill while wearing a heavy steel helmet. Both Lieutenant Mike and Lieutenant David decided to do something about it. They sent to London and had two papier-mâché helmets made, exact replicas of the steel helmets they were supposed to wear. It was all right then. Their fellow officers wondered why they never perspired in the hot rays of the sun; why they carried their heads so jauntily on parade. That is, until it rained one day in the midst of drill.

"Our painted papier-mâché helmets started to run badly, then wilt," he says sadly, "and in two minutes we looked like two drunken gnomes with bluebells on our heads."

It was a little bit after this that Niven decided to give up the Army. The life was grand but it was so ordered that there was little chance of asserting one's personality. The Army pattern was a rigid one. So many years as a junior officer, then a slight advancement, and so it went.

"I could look ahead twenty years and see myself sitting in the Army and Navy Club behind a big Scotch and soda, telling the youngsters how great the regiment was in the good old days," Niven says. "Then the financial question was becoming—well, not desperate, but intriguing. The trouble is that you can get unlimited credit if you are an officer and a gentleman and my will power was such that I found it easy to take advantage of

that credit. Oh, I was the bookmakers' delight all right, although I was slow pay. It got so that they were calling up my colonel and asking him please to persuade me to pay just a little on account."

Like many a one before him, Niven decided to seek his fortune in America. To him America meant Canada. A friend of his, Philip Astley, was about to make the same quest, so David decided to go along.

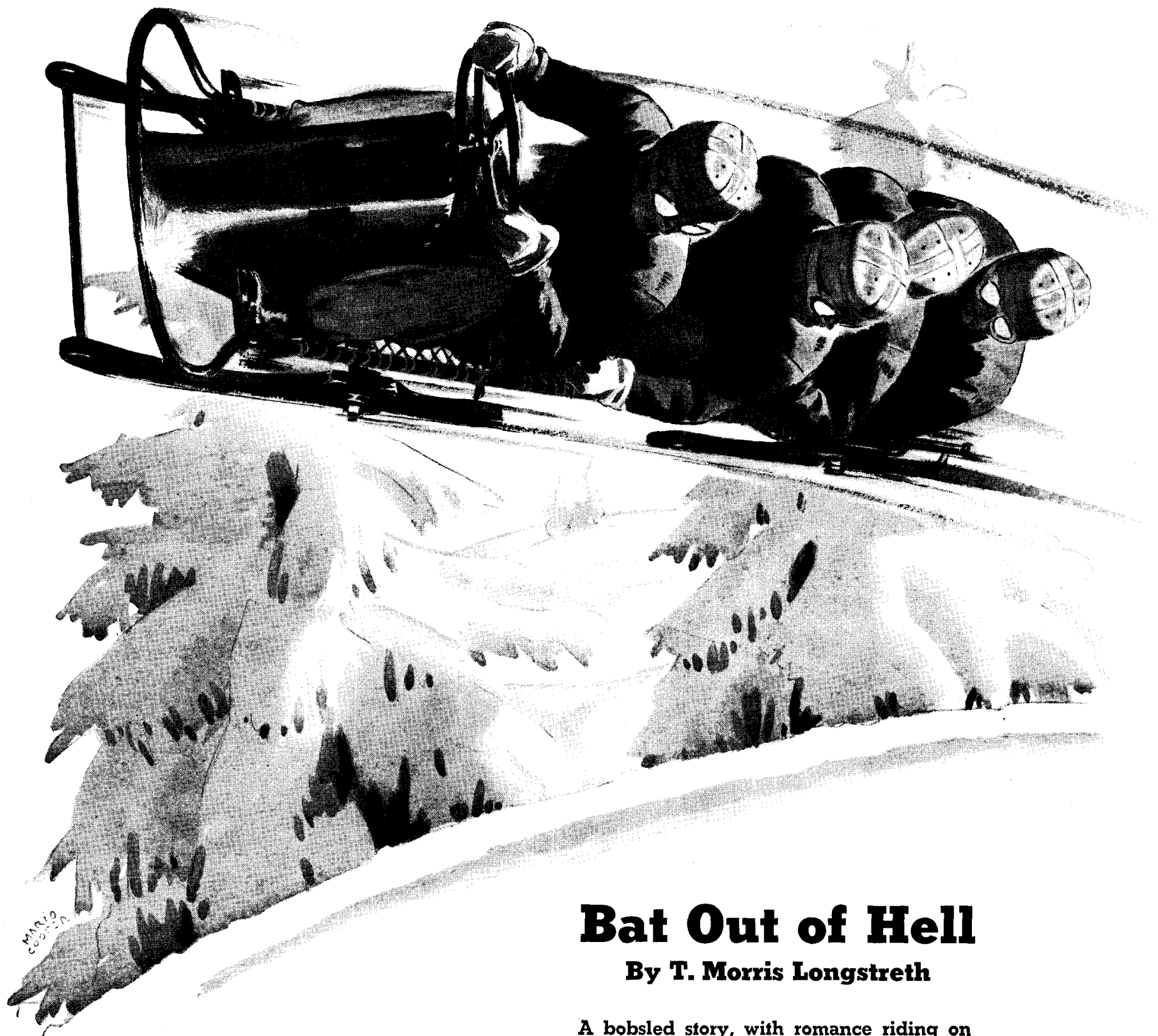
Even now he had no idea that his destiny would ever lead to Hollywood. Once he had met Eddie Goulding in London. He had met Sally Blane, too, and they were the only picture people he knew. He lived in Canada for a time and it wasn't much fun. It wasn't much fun because he was broke, he was untrained to anything except the business of being an officer and a gentleman and although these were interesting qualities they were not economically salable. So he went to work with a road gang that was building a bridge in the Redeau Lake district.

"Sixteen cents an hour I got," he says, "and I earned it. How I earned it!"

Meeting the Best People

You can't buy many clothes on sixteen cents an hour and you can't even afford to have an operation. Not even a little operation like having tonsils yanked. And he had to have his tonsils yanked. There was a veterinarian in a near-by village who sometimes took time off from doctoring horses to yank tonsils. He charged ten dollars if he was

(Continued on page 48)



The sled swept into sight. Four helmets on a bullet. A projectile rocketing up—up . . . too far. A scream from the stands

Bat Out of Hell

By T. Morris Longstreth

A bobsled story, with romance riding on glare ice. The girl who was too smart to use her brakes wins the race, but loses the prize

I JOLTED the snow from my skis and stood them up in the locker. The dining room would be closed, but there was always the tearoom. I felt like a million dollars after its third highball. Lake Placid does that to me. And then I had to barge into Barr and Mary Wall! Barr opened his fat mouth to argue it all over again. "Just the person we were looking for," he said.

"Once more, nothing doing," I said.

"You've got to," Barr said.

"Nope! I've told you I'm many kinds of a fool but not that kind."

"But, Sam, why not?" Mary nosed in.

"Because bob racing doesn't appeal to me. Why risk six months in the hospital for something you're not interested in?"

"Listen to the man!" Mary exclaimed. "He hates taking risks and then goes out and jumps off a mountain! You're not very consistent, Sam."

"I always get that way when I'm hungry," I said.

"That's not the point," Barr said. "If you won't enter, Sam, Vermont can't have a sled in the race."

"Vermont voted Republican; that's enough glory for Vermont. I'm not racing, see? I experimented with that stuff abroad, and you can have it."

"But, Sam . . ." Barr persisted, his hundred and eighty pounds quivering with determination.

"That's final," I said. "I won't drive your sled or ride on your sled. So stay away from my door."

"WAIT, here comes Sandy Bains," Mary said as a couple of girls came down the lobby accompanied by six men. It didn't take two looks to be sure that here was the most glorious and triumphant-looking blonde that ever made a man think guiltily.

Barr rolled his hoop through the male interference, said something to this queen, and then introduced me.

"Isn't this nice?" and her voice was like her, thrilling. "I've seen your wonderful jumping, Mr. Gerster, and wanted to meet you. A little bird tells me that you may drive a sled for Vermont in the races."

"A little bird weighing a hundred and eighty pounds?" I asked.

"Is it true?" Her frank blue eyes gave a man no chance.

"Well . . ." I said, and Mary's tiny snicker hardly irritated me.

"Hannah and I both hope so," she said. "We're from Vermont, too." And she introduced the girl beside her as her sister.

I'd have needed a birth certificate to believe it, for Hannah was a retiring little thing with dark hair and dark, serious eyes. But nature does tricks like that. I shook hands with her and then said to Sandra, "Let's go talk it over."

"While we dance?" Sandra suggested.

"Better and better." Somehow the scrambled eggs and coffee had lost their importance.

"Do you mind, Sis?" Sandra asked.

"Of course not," Hannah said with a smile that I guess she'd had to cultivate, but was pretty nice, at that.

Sandra and I didn't talk much, dancing. She gave me that something a jumper feels after his swoop to the take-off, when he's in the air. You wish it could

go on forever. But we must've said something, for when I got back to my room I realized that I was cast as Vermont's savior in the States Cup races. And I'd agreed to go over the course next morning with Sandy at ten.

It was the run built down the side of Mt. Van Hoevenberg for the Olympics. And had those engineers had fun! They'd bunkered this adult mountain with a series of hairpin turns. You fell something like a mile and a half, by jerks. To be fair to the engineers, they had calculated a man's chances to a nicety. If you did everything *just* right, you lived. There was always an ambulance in waiting. Ironically, the place was very beautiful.

So was Sandy. The cold light didn't destroy her the way it would most girls who seemed to have everything on a dance floor. She reminded me of that statue I saw in Paris, except that she had a head and had shed the wings. This was her setting, though, this world of snow and keen air and lots of space.

HANNAH had ridden to the top of the slide with us. She stood around shivering and kind of out of it. Sandy tried to interest her in the sleds and the system of signals, but she wasn't having any. "Won't you try it just once with us, Han?" Sandra asked. "I'm going to take Sam down slowly to show him the track. Come on."

"Nothing could induce me," Hannah said.

"Sensible girl," I thought; but I said, "You don't know what you're missing."

"Do you *really* like it?" she asked me.

"Of course he does, silly!" Sandy said quickly. "And you're going to *love* this track, Sam."

"I'm sure I shall," I lied. "Who thought up the name?" I pointed to the conical hood of the Vermont sled with *Bat Out of Hell* printed on it in red letters.

"Isn't it priceless?" Sandy asked. "The first time I took her down I heard one of the natives say, 'She come like a bat outa hell. Now didn't she?' She's a good sled."

She looked like an instrument of the devil's all right. She was only five inches short of twelve feet long, weighed nearly 500 pounds, and had a steering wheel like an auto. Sid Nelson, our tail man, showed me his brakes, sharp-toothed iron plates that looked as if they could rake the ice hard enough to stop us on a precipice. When we got our goggles and helmets on we looked like people ready to be gassed by Fascists. Sandy put me No. 2, right behind her. "I'll name the scenery, the exciting parts," she said. "There are only three bad places, really. Whiteface, Shady Corner and Zigzag. All clear?" she called up to the man in the tower.

"All clear, Miss Bains."

"Shove away," she called to Sid Nelson.

Sid shoved and vaulted into his seat. The sled ducked over the crest and we started falling down the iced chute like something tied to the devil's own tail.

THERE'S something about speed. It gets you. It's the supreme intoxication, I guess, and the only one without a hangover. I started down that track cursing the senseless sport, and I ended up feeling like the bubbles in a highball. Or maybe it was Sandy. She was magnificent. She'd steered that gob of lightning around those damnable corners as easy as a swallow playing with its shadow. Cool as blue ice. And when she crawled out and swept off the goggles, all she said was, "Track's a bit slow this morning. But what do you think of it, Sam?"

Halfway down I'd've said "Suicidal," but I changed it to "Swell!" It was worth a bigger lie than that to see her eyes brighten.

"I knew you'd appreciate it," she said. "Now we'll shoot you through the routine to qualify as quickly as possible."

"Do you think I can grab enough routine before the races?" I asked.

"You? You could do it in a week."

"But where do you come in then?" I asked. "What's the matter with your driving?"

"You're heavier, Sam. And every ounce counts. Don't you want to?"

I got the slight edge that had crept into her voice and said, "Sure I want to."

"Good! We're set. Now let's lose no time."

Well, I saw I was caught. Goodbye skiing. But Sandy had hit me where I hadn't been hit before. I wanted her the way a gangster wants diamonds. And the way to get her was to learn those curves—the track's, I mean. Putting in my vacation driving that cursed sled down that cursed mountain was a small price.

New York State is canny. She makes you sign a waiver that gives your estate no comeback after the funeral. And to make sure there'll be no kick from



A couple of girls came down the lobby, accompanied by six men

the deceased's relatives, she frames a lot of tests. Very gradual. By the time I'd qualified to steer the victims from the top, I'd got to like it. I liked roaring up the wall of Whiteface to the edge of the rim. I liked that frustrated quiver of the sled under a firm hand. I even got to like that infernal double curve at Zigzag where one cliff volleyed you to the other like some diabolic Don Budge. But swellest of all was having Sandy pat me on the arm and smile. And for reward, dancing with her every night.

Of course I danced with Hannah some, out of courtesy to Sandy. Usually she preferred to sit it out, though, and knit.

One night she handed me a jolt. "I don't believe you really care for this bob racing at all, Sam. Why do you do it?"

"Don't you think it!" I said manfully. "There's nothing like it. Why'd you say that?"

She smiled a little. "Don't ask a girl how she knows things, Sam. But I won't tell on you. I think it's wonderful of you to make yourself do it. Sandy thinks you're a marvel to catch on so quickly."

"Sandy's a marvelous teacher," I said. "Certainly a swell all-round girl." And I watched her sail past on the floor with Eric Kivian.

"She certainly is," Hannah said, very sincerely. There wasn't a spot of envy or jealousy in her.

I wasn't so good. Jealousy had dug its dirty teeth into me the day Kivian showed up. One of those black-haired boys with the Foreign Legion temperament. His real attraction for Sandy was his well-advertised experience at lugging and bobbing on the big runs abroad. He danced well, and I noticed that I was helping Hannah knit oftener than I liked.

"Cheer up, Sam," she said, just as if I'd mentioned it. "Mr. Kivian's driving the sled for New York, you know."

"What's that got to do with it? You mean that all the Bat has to do is beat the New York sled?"

"You're smart, Sam," Hannah said.

"I'll go cut in and see," I said.

"Good luck," Hannah said.

AS THE race Saturday neared, excitement got us. A dozen states had entries. The betting favored New York, on account of Kivian. But the New Hampshire sled and ours were conceded the dark-horse chance.

It was Sandy who had put us in the upper flight with her coaching. She'd worked hard on the bobbing. That's the sway forward to Sid's one, two, *bob!* that yanks the sled ahead faster than gravity.

She'd also specialized on our leaning at the curves. When nature and instinct pull you out, you've got to jilt them and lean in.

The way our crew let Sandy and me experiment on them, I got to thinking of them as heroes. The Bat was doing 54 seconds now, on good ice. Pretty close to Olympic time.

By the night before the race I was strung so fine I could feel each separate nerve twanging in my body. I didn't want to knit. I wanted Sandy. And alone, not in Kivian's arms, waltzing. Maybe I did tap him harder than necessary, but he needn't have got so sore about it. Sandy got me off the floor. "You've been drinking," she said.

"Water and only water, so help me," I said. "I don't need to drink with you around. But pretend I have and let's dance it off."

"No, you have to race tomorrow, Sam."

"Well, doesn't Kivian?"

"That's his lookout. I want you to get some sleep."

"What? At ten o'clock? I couldn't sleep anyway with you down here dancing with that bolero."

"Don't be an idiot," Sandy said. "By



"All right, Jenks, you may call the guests to dinner"

LAWRENCE LARIAR

the way, I've just had a talk with Sid about braking. He drags too long. There's no necessity . . ."

"I know, I know," I said impatiently, for this was a hot point between us. "You want us to pretend we're swallows and forget the brakes. Well, we shave pretty close to God-save-us now. And I'm responsible for those men's lives, not forgetting my own. After all, it's a game, Sandy."

"All I'm asking," Sandy said, "is that you don't throw the race away at Shady Corner and Zigzag. You habitually brake too soon and drag too long. I don't want you mangled, naturally. But I do want you to use your brakes less and your eye more. You still play a shade too safe."

"In other words, I'm a coward," I said.

"You make me so furious!" Sandy said, though still quietly. "You know I don't think that. All I'm saying is that you don't realize your marvelous ability, your sense of timing. Trust it, shave off two seconds somewhere and we'll beat Kivian."

"And that'll make you happy?" I asked, a little happier myself.

"What is your considered opinion?" she asked with a smile. "Sam, you're a funny boy. You don't know me at all."

"How about a little get-together then?" I said, for the music was asking me to take her in my arms.

"Tomorrow night, Sam. Now you must sleep."

"Listen, sweetheart," I said. "I used to allow my parents to send me to bed, but I'll be damned if I'll let you."

"But the race! The race, Sam!"

"Good God! Are you a girl or are you the Olympic Games?" I burst out. "Here I am, crazy about you . . ."

"Tell me tomorrow night," she said over her shoulder and stepped into the elevator. I could have slapped her down if I hadn't been so mad about her.

I cut a line through the beavies of

sweetness in the lobby and into a cozy little room with a fireplace. And there was Hannah, sitting alone before a quiet blaze, knitting.

"Oh, Sam!" she said, "I think my prayers are being answered."

"Such as?" I asked, pretty short and sharp.

"For the Gulf Stream to change its course. And the temperature's 33 already. I just looked."

"A thaw?" This was the last straw. "You, praying for a thaw? Trying to ruin the track and our race and keep Vermont from taking that fandango Kivian for a ride?" I felt savage.

"I don't care a button about Vermont and the old race," she said. "You men get so desperately excited over a perfectly inconsequential thing. I just hate for you to break your necks."

"I always wondered how you and Sandy could be sisters," I said, and I meant it to hurt.

AND it did. Her knitting stopped and her dark, soft eyes looked up so big and surprised! But I tore right on. "Well, you can go down on your knees and call your thaw off," I said. "What do you suppose I've been working like a nut for these last weeks? Because I didn't want to race? Well, I'll show you. Come out tomorrow and you'll see something."

"I couldn't, Sam. I couldn't, any more than I could go to a bullfight."

"How is it that Sandy got all the blood in your family?"

"Oh, Sam, don't . . ."

If I'd been a man instead of a racing machine, I'd've apologized and held her yarn or something. But I breezed off to look at the thermometer. It said 35. What a letdown that was going to be!

And sure enough, the big day broke as if Hannah herself had fixed it all up. The mountains were that huckleberry blue that means rain.

About eleven Hannah changed her mind, I suppose, for the wind switched northwest and the temp started dropping. The track hardened to cold blue ice, faster than it had been for the Olympics. The crowds streamed out along the snowbanked road and into the stands.

It must've been zero by 2 o'clock, which, as Barr pointed out, was the zero hour, anyway. He could joke; he didn't have to steer. I was shaking like a milk pudding and it wasn't the cold. I tried to listen to Sandy. "Don't anticipate the disks," she was saying.

It was her old song: don't brake too soon. The big-hearted Conservation Commission had put up yellow and red and blue disks at the tough places to warn you where you were. I just said "Yes," and wondered where she kept her heart. She was as cool as my feet were.

The entries had got pared down to ten, and when we drew for places, we got tenth. Owing to the length of the card, each sled was to have two tries, instead of three. Best time to win.

FROM the first sled's time, I could tell it was going to be no horse-and-buggy day. Massachusetts did 52.6 seconds, only a second slower than the course record. California nipped Massachusetts by $\frac{2}{3}$ of a second. Minnesota upset, and it took them some while to sweep the pieces of pants and things off the track, but no one was hurt. New Hampshire did 52 flat to a barrel of cheers.

New York ran next and I watched Sandy's face. I'm a suspicious guy, I'm afraid. But I was satisfied. For when the loud-speaker announced that Kivian had done 51.2 seconds, I saw her jaw go tight. That was incredible speed and perfect skill. And Sandy frowned! I climbed in behind the wheel, happy. The signal came. Sandy gave me one of those "I rely on you" looks. I felt the shove. The Bat hit the glare ice like it could hear hell sizzling right behind.

The track was sure fast. We shot into the first curve, Eyrie, like a well-controlled tornado; but I cut down into the straight again without brakes. But Whiteface couldn't be played with at that speed. I yelled for the iron at the last tenth of a second, and I could tell by the way Sid clamped down that he was hungry for the word. At Shady Corner, the same, and if he rode 'em too long, only a perfectionist on the side lines could blame him. As it was, the whip-lash on the end of that sled must've been terrific. But he was still with us as we roared into Zigzag at seventy. I got through by a prayer. I felt like I'd been put through a giant clothes wringer as we crossed the line.

"Good work, Sam," Barr said huskily. "You . . ."

The announcer cut in with, "First heat. Bat Out of Hell . . . 52.3 seconds."

"Gosh, we must've done better than that!" Sid said.

"Our record anyway," Lon, our No. 3 man, said.

"What the hell good is that?" Sid said.

"Cheer up. There's another heat, isn't there?" Barr said.

"Sure there's another," I said, but I didn't see how we could go much faster.

It was a slow, cold ride up. At a forced stop near Shady Corner, Sid said, "Let's watch one go through."

It wasn't a good idea, but the boys deserved what they wanted, so we crowded down an aisle to the front of the stand. The loud-speaker was saying, "Red Demon on the line . . ." That was California. Then came the "All clear!" and "She's off!" Electric words.

The seconds seemed minutes. Then the blurred staccato high up, deepening as she came, and filling to a roar when the sled swept into sight. Four helmets on a bullet! A projectile rocketing up

(Continued on page 37)

By
Hugh Wiley

ILLUSTRATED BY IRVING NURICK

The Eye of Heaven

In which James Lee, Chinese-American
undercover man, brilliantly proves
that the cleverest crook cannot
walk two roads at once

IN HIS apartment in San Francisco James Lee sensed the fact that someone was standing in the darkened doorway of his library. "What is it?" he asked abruptly.

His servant, Lin Sung, answered. "One of our countrymen—Moy Hop—desires to consult you."

"On what subject?"

"The human memory is limitless," Lin Sung suggested. "On the eleventh day of the sixth moon last year there was a deed of violence perpetrated in this city that gave you deep concern."

James Lee frowned. "The eleventh day of the sixth moon would be—August 26th."

Lin Sung nodded. "In the Western fashion," he agreed.

"August 26th—that would be the Wagner jewel robbery."

"Exactly."

"What has Moy Hop to do with that?"

"Who am I to know all between Yang and Yin? He desires to confer with you on the subject."

"Bring him in."

When Moy Hop had been ushered into James Lee's library, after appropriate greetings had been exchanged, he observed, "No man has explored the wide sea of human memory."

"Continue, if you please."

"The jewels that were stolen in the Wagner robbery—it happens that I remember the illustrations and the descriptions of some of these diamonds and emeralds."

"You mean the newspaper descriptions?"

"Even so. These stolen jewels have never been recovered?"

"To my knowledge, not one of them,"

James Lee stated. "Why are you interested in them?"

Moy Hop's eyes narrowed. "I think that I saw several of these large jewels in a bracelet presented last night to Miss Louise Cuboni by my master, Harper Kenman."

JAMES LEE glanced at the clock on his desk. "That's very interesting," he said to Moy Hop. He reached for the telephone directory and got the number of Leslie Wagner's residence.

To the jeweler, he said, "James Lee speaking—Bureau of Investigation. I have a lead on your August robbery. By any chance have you paste replicas or crystal models of any of the larger stones that were lost?"

"I have replicas of most of the emeralds and of all the large diamonds."

"Can you bring them here now?"

"I can be over in a few minutes. I have to stop in at the store and get them."

"Right. I would like to have you bring a handful of other imitation jewels with you—emeralds and diamonds."

"I don't get you."

"I have a man here who may be able to identify the stolen jewels. His story will carry more weight with me if he can pick them out of a lot of similar stuff."

"I understand. I'll be at your apartment in thirty minutes."

Within the hour, from an array of approximately two hundred unset paste diamonds and emeralds spread in glittering disorder on James Lee's desk, Moy Hop, houseboy for Harper Kenman, began his memory test. The stones were spread over an area two feet square and he worked through them rapidly with a thin ruler after the man-

ner of a fan-tan dealer. "This is one," he said three minutes after he began his inspection. He selected a green stone from four that lay along the edge of the ruler.

A look of pleased astonishment flashed to Leslie Wagner's face. "He's right!" he exclaimed.

James Lee nodded.

"This one—and this." Moy Hop picked up an eight-carat rectangular paste diamond and another green stone. "I am—" he hesitated. "I'm not sure that this white stone is in Miss Cuboni's bracelet. I'll put it back."

FOR a moment James Lee's glance lifted to Moy Hop's face. Moy Hop did not look up from his task.

"Wonderful memory!" Wagner exclaimed. "That stone—"

James Lee silenced Wagner with a lifted hand.

A minute later from eleven stones against the edge of the ruler Moy Hop selected three. "Two diamonds—and this green stone."

At this, in spite of James Lee's protests, "That's wonderful!" Wagner complimented. "So far one hundred per cent. Listen, Mr. Lee, no mere talking can bother that fellow. Marvelous memory!"

James Lee, indulgent of Wagner's enthusiasm, smiled at the jeweler. "I suspect that you do not play chess," he said cryptically.

Wagner, once more absorbed in Moy Hop's problem, did not reply.

After a moment when the array of stones to Moy Hop's right had dwindled to fifty, "This green stone," Moy Hop decided, and then quickly, from the next



In four strides Lee was at Kenman's side. He shook Kenman's inert form. "This man is dead!" he announced

Moy Hop laid the ruler down and looked at James Lee. "The bracelet," he said, "that my master gave to his lady was like this"

row against the ruler's edge, "And this one—and this."

Moy Hop arranged the four paste diamonds and the four emeralds, the green and white stones alternating. He laid the ruler down and looked at James Lee. "The bracelet," he said, "that my master gave to his lady was like this."

Now with all restrictions of silence removed, Leslie Wagner, exulting in the hope of regaining his lost treasures, began a garrulous tribute to Moy Hop's skill. "I've never seen anything like it in the history of the human race on land or sea," he said, admiration shining in his eyes. To Moy Hop, "Boy, you're cut in for a mighty big chunk of reward money if—"

James Lee tapped the edge of his desk impatiently. "All of that will come later, Mr. Wagner. You may let the case remain in my hands, if you don't mind."

Wagner frowned. "Moy Hop isn't going to be aced out of any reward. . . . I beg your pardon, Mr. Lee." A look in James Lee's eyes had interrupted the jeweler. "You're the doctor. Excuse me. You can understand how I feel about this."

"I understand," James Lee said.

"IT'S marvelous!" Excited, Leslie Wagner reached for a cigarette. His hand trembled while he lighted it. "It's marvelous," he repeated. "Where do you suppose Kenman got hold of those stones?"

James Lee countered with another question: "You're sure that the eight stones here, selected by Moy Hop, were part of the loot in your August robbery?"

"Absolutely. How did Moy Hop know about them?"

"He read the papers, I suppose, after the robbery. He may have seen them exhibited in your window. The point is, his photographic memory has brought us this far."

"What's the next move?" The jeweler threw his cigarette in the fireplace. "Cuboni's people announced her engagement to Kenman a week ago," he said.

"Do you know her?"

"I've known the Cuboni family for years."

"Do you know Harper Kenman?"

"I've met him several times."

"What about him?"

Leslie Wagner halted and looked straight at James Lee. "What do you mean?"

"I mean—what do you know about Kenman?"

"I wish you'd send these two men out for a moment." Wagner nodded his head at Moy Hop and at Lin Sung, who stood, silent, back of his master's chair.

Before James Lee could speak Lin Sung laid his hand on Moy Hop's wrist. He turned to James Lee. "We will be in the kitchen if you want us," he said.

James Lee nodded at his servant. "Thank you." When the two Chinese had left the library he turned to Wagner. "Tell me everything you know about Harper Kenman."

"There's a little that I know and more that I've heard," Wagner began.

James Lee nodded. "Shoot the works. Let's have all of it."

Leslie Wagner closed his eyes and began reaching around in the archives of his memory for the data on Harper Kenman. "He was in New York around 1930. He went broke in '29. He had been in China on a railroad deal that blew

up before that—building some railroads for one of the Chinese governments. He landed here and milled around for six months. Then he blossomed out as one of the vice-presidents of the Pacific Orient Trust. They floated a lot of phony irrigation bonds and a Persian oil enterprise. There was some talk of appointing him a member of the State Railroad Commission, but that blew up. He financed a jerkwater movie enterprise down the peninsula. That blew up. He made some money out of selling half a dozen old ships to Japan. He cleaned up in that crooked radio deal four years ago. He's about forty years old, and is one of the most engaging, affable men I've ever met."

"One of your customers, by any chance?"

LESLIE WAGNER reached for another cigarette. "That's how I happen to know as much as I do about him. He has been in the store many times. I never bothered much about his credit."

"Does he own that house that he lives in out on Pacific Avenue?"

"Yes. He bought it from the McAlpin estate after Joe died. Paid cash for it."

"How long ago was that?"

"Some time in September last year. That's about all I know about him, except what the society editors whipped up announcing his engagement to Louise Cuboni."

"He sounds interesting. Do you figure he's a crook or an honest man?"

Leslie Wagner twisted his mouth into a sardonic smile. "There's a lot of crooks around here who turn out to be honest men—after they make enough money to gag the voice of history."

"In other words, you think that Moy

Hop's news item is worth investigating?"

Leslie Wagner's mouth hardened. "I'm going to get the insurance detectives on it in ten minutes."

"Hold the deal." James Lee raised his hand. "Take it easy. They have been working on it a long time without any results. I'm overloaded with work, but if you don't mind I'd like to look this deal over with Moy Hop's help before you make any further moves."

A quick enthusiasm lighted Leslie Wagner's face. "Would you do that for me? I'd rather have you on the job than a dozen of the insurance people."

"Thank you," James Lee smiled. "It happens to be one of my jobs. The department cuts into the case on the strength of the fingerprints on that broken plate glass in your store window. Do you remember?"

"Of course. I had forgotten about the federal angle. What was that tie-up? Do you mind telling me?"

"Narcotic case. Opium," James Lee said briefly. "The man who broke the window of your store has room and board waiting for him through the courtesy of the government—if we can pick him up."

"What do you want me to do?"

"You say you're an old friend of the Cuboni family?"

"Three generations of Cubonis have been our customers."

"Good! First of all, on the strength of your friendship, borrow the bracelet that Kenman gave Miss Cuboni. Can you do that?"

"Of course. Then what?"

"Keep it in your possession. I'll telephone you later tonight at your residence."

"What are you going to do?"

"That, my dear Mr. Wagner, is for the moment strictly my business, if you please. Now, if you will gather up these magnificent and colorful jewels I will ask you to enjoy a stirrup cup with me—and then I start to work."

A MOMENT after Wagner began to gather up the imitation jewels, "I'd like to borrow one of those magnificent diamonds," James Lee said.

"Help yourself. You can have the lot if they'll be of any service to you."

"Thank you. . . . Only this one." From the collection James Lee selected the eight-carat rectangular stone whose identity had momentarily puzzled Moy Hop. "It will be good for Moy Hop's vanity if the original of this one happens to be in Miss Cuboni's bracelet," he suggested.

"You don't want any of the rest of them?"

James Lee shook his head. "Only this one, thank you. Just a moment and I'll get something to drink. Will you have Scotch or bourbon?"

"Scotch, please."

James Lee walked to his kitchen. "Please bring in some Scotch for Mr. Wagner," he said to Lin Sung. "I'll have some sherry." Turning to Moy Hop, "If you do not have to return at once to Mr. Kenman's house, I may have some work for you to do presently."

Bowing to James Lee, "Your desires are my commands," Moy Hop said. "Who am I to question the will of heaven?"

In the same ritual, smiling at Moy Hop, "A wise man understands a nod. When Mr. Wagner departs I would consult with you on another problem. We have work to do."



In the first detail of the work to which James Lee referred was the task of obtaining from Moy Hop a series of quick biographical sketches of the personnel of Harper Kenman's house. Within twenty minutes after he had begun his inquisition James Lee had obtained Moy Hop's testimony covering the salient characteristics of Harper Kenman; Joseph Battley, the valet; Jelvik, his cook; Walter Shore, his secretary; together with an impressionistic sketch of Louise Cuboni.

"Repeat your statement relative to Battley, the valet," James Lee requested, closing his eyes, the better to impress the verbal picture of Battley on his memory.

In Cantonese, "There is something eternally mysterious about the man," Moy Hop related. "Battley, displaying usually a gentle and tranquil spirit, is at times capable of flaming into a murderous rage that makes me cringe in fear. He has worked for Kenman many years. Battley's father was an innkeeper in England. When this man died he left his son nearly forty thousand dollars, which Battley invested in some enterprise with Kenman in New York. The money was lost. In moments of drunken rage Battley swears revenge against Kenman."

"You say the man was in the British army?"

"Battley served for four years in France. In his cups he speaks of the men he killed with his bayonet in various battles."

After a moment, "Tell me again about your master's secretary."

"His name is Walter Shore. He has been with us less than three months. My master had a Javanese secretary before Mr. Shore came—a man he met in Surabaya. A man who had been educated in Holland and England."

"Where is this man now?"

"I do not know."

James Lee reached once more for the decanter of sherry that sat on his desk. He poured a glass of wine. "Good luck, long life," he said. "Seven sons to mourn at your grave. Return now to your master's house. I will follow you promptly. And remember—silence!"

AT THE doorway of James Lee's library Moy Hop made his parting obeisance. When he had gone James Lee put through a telephone call to police headquarters. "James Lee speaking," he said; "Federal Bureau of Investigation. Let me have the fingerprint classification in the Wagner jewel robbery, prints found on broken plate glass in Wagner's window. I'll wait."

In less than three minutes, "Here you are, Mr. Lee. Ready?"

"Quick work. Shoot."

"All under the line—nothing on the right hand."

"Okay."

"Fourteen C O 15. That's all we've got."

"I hope it's plenty. Many thanks."

James Lee hung up the telephone and sought his servant. "I shall be gone perhaps for an hour, perhaps all night," he said to Lin Sung.

"Do you wish me to drive your car?"

"I am taking a taxi."

In the taxi James Lee devoted five minutes to a quick review of the layout of the Kenman house as Moy Hop had described it. A block from his destination he dismissed the taxi. Now for the first time since Moy Hop had told his story a premonition of danger altered the program of direct action that he had resolved to adopt. The weight of a .45 automatic hanging in its holster under his left armpit afforded him a comforting sense of protection. A smaller gun, a .32 revolver in the right pocket of his coat gave him an added sense of security. "It's absurd," he mused, "to

contemplate imaginative dangers—but nevertheless I am glad that I am armed."

He pressed the button to the right of the front door of the Kenman residence. To his casual surprise the door swung open three seconds later—too promptly for his peace of mind. "I would like to see Mr. Kenman," he said to the silent figure in the shadowed doorway. "I am James Lee of the Bureau of Investigation—the Department of Justice."

"This man would be Battley, Kenman's valet," Lee judged. "Tall, slim, fifty years old, bald, narrow eyes, nervous and shifty."

"Please come in, sir," the man said unctuously. "The master, Mr. Kenman, is at the moment in the library."

Thirty feet down the dark hallway, passing a closed door to the left, Battley knocked softly on the panels of a door to his right. Then, without waiting for a response to his signal, "This is the library, sir," he said, opening the heavy-paneled door to admit the visitor. In a somewhat formal voice, "Mr. James Lee," Battley announced, and then, with unwarranted resentment in his tone, "Mr. James Lee of the bloody secret service." Again, unctuously, "Walk in, sir. The master is probably at his desk."

James Lee glanced sharply at the man. "Thank you. The Bureau of Investigation—not the Secret Service."

"Right, sir. Sorry, sir. Old Battley fumbles the ball now and then, what?"

Turning his back on Battley, James Lee walked into the library. It was forty feet long and twenty feet wide. The entrance door through which he had come led into an alcove ten feet wide that opened upon the main room. Books lined the two long walls. Fronting a fireplace in the south wall there was a great carved walnut desk. At the desk, his back to the fireplace, slouched across an array of documents, in seeming slumber, sat Harper Kenman. Three

paces inside the entrance to the library James Lee turned squarely to face the man. He said quietly, "Mr. Kenman?"

There was no answer.

In a louder voice, "Mr. Kenman!"

Kenman did not move.

James Lee took one step toward the inert figure and then, hesitating, he turned to summon Battley.

Before his vision ranged to the alcove of the library he felt a searing pain slash the flesh of his left forearm. An instant later the crash of a pistol shot reverberated in his ears. He reached for the gun in his coat pocket and swung around to face the source of the shot. On the instant the library lights went out. He heard Battley's voice bellowing an incoherent alarm and then, more distinctly, "What the devil is all this? Jelvik! Mr. Shore! Mr. Shore! Come downstairs at once, sir! This outrageous detective fellow is letting off a pistol!"

There was a commotion in the rear of the house. Hurried footsteps in the hallway above.

THE lights flashed on. Battley walked bravely into the library through the alcove from the hall. Five feet behind him there followed another man. Battley called to this second man. "See, Jelvik, there he is! That's him! Take him, Jelvik! Wing him! Look out there for his pistol!" Battley glanced at his master, slumped across the desk. "On my word, I believe he's shot Mr. Kenman!"

His right arm steady against his side, James Lee leveled his weapon at the pair. "Halt where you are! Jelvik, drop that gun! Drop it! Hands up—you two!"

At the top of his voice Battley let out another yell for Walter Shore. "Take care, Mr. Shore, this murd'rous blighter is armed!"

Behind Jelvik, James Lee saw Moy Hop slide in through the door. "Moy Hop, you come here," James Lee or-

dered. At this command the Chinese houseboy edged around Jelvik and Battley to approach James Lee. "Mr. Lee! You're hurt!" Moy Hop exclaimed. "See! Blood drips from your hand."

Before James Lee replied a voice from the hallway called to Battley. "What's going on here, Battley? Who did the shooting?"

"Don't come in, Mr. Shore! Stay out, Mr. Shore! Send for the police! There's a man here shot Mr. Kenman!"

James Lee passed his .32 quickly to Moy Hop. "Hold these two men! If they move shoot them," he commanded. He unbuttoned his vest and made a quick pull at the .45 automatic slung in its holster under his left armpit. He called to Walter Shore. "Battley is a liar! Mr. Shore, please come in here. I am police enough for the moment." Walking to the library entrance as he spoke, James Lee faced Walter Shore in the wide hallway of Kenman's house. "I am James Lee," he said. "Federal Bureau of Investigation. Please come in here. You're safe."

With his .45 automatic James Lee waved Walter Shore into the library. Following the man, a trail of blood dripped from the knuckles of Lee's clenched left hand. Seeing this, "Who shot you?" Walter Shore asked, coolly. "I don't know—probably Jelvik there. He came into the picture waving a gun. That gun on the floor."

"I'll fix you up if I may," Shore said quietly. "I know first aid."

"Just a moment," James Lee replied. Over his shoulder, "Moy Hop, come here. . . . Closer. Hold your gun on these men while I search them. If either one moves let him have it!"

James Lee cradled the blue automatic between his wounded left arm and his body. Rapidly the skillful fingers of his right hand explored Jelvik for another weapon.

"Dat's de only gun I got, mister," Jelvik said, midway of the search. "De one on de floor."

James Lee looked down at the gun. He kicked it ten feet along the hardwood floor of the library. "Maybe, I'll find out," he said. "Stand still!"

Jelvik had told the truth.

James Lee moved to where Battley stood with his hands up. On Battley's face there was suddenly a mask of insane rage. He gritted his teeth, his eyes flaming, and snarled at James Lee. "I'd like to twist a bayonet through your heart," he grated. "Stab you neat and let you choke on your own blood."

JAMES LEE proceeded calmly with his search. "No doubt of it," he admitted easily. "And now—what's this!"

From Battley's right hip pocket James Lee extracted a .25 automatic. His eyes narrowed. "Not such a hell of a good marksman, are you, Battley?" he questioned. "It's excusable. These little things always shoot wild." He slipped the gun in his own pocket. "Mr. Shore—if you don't mind I believe I'll ask you to rig a twister above my left elbow. I seem to be messing up the place with blood."

James Lee turned to Moy Hop. "All safe now," he said. "March these two men down by the fireplace and hold them there."

"I ain't done nothin' to you, mister," Jelvik protested.

"Not yet," James Lee admitted. "Get down there and shut up!"

To Moy Hop, "Let them sit down," Lee directed. "Far end of the room. Hold them there. If either man makes a move let him have it!"

Passing Harper Kenman, slouched across the desk, Battley averted his eyes from his employer. Jelvik, looking down at Kenman, suddenly grunted like a startled hog. "De man is stabbed!" he

(Continued on page 36)



"Now don't go jumping to conclusions, Officer!"

SYDNEY HOFF

The Battle Cry of Business

Continued from page 17

three taxes that were to have been wiped out but added three per cent to the normal corporate tax. And when these levies are supplemented by state and local taxes, by excises and manufacturers' sales taxes, by license and sundry other fees, business claims the right to cry out against grievances too grievous to be borne.

What industry and finance want is to have the tax repealed outright, but, failing this, insistence will be placed on radical amendments. While admitting that this might cause a substantial diminution of revenue at first, it is urged that such loss would eventually be more than offset by increased activity and increased employment, due not only to improvements and expansions but also to the recovery of confidence, initiative and courage by business as a whole. And, warn the financiers and industrialists, if these revisions are not made, let no one doubt that capital will continue its "sit-down strike," for who but a fool would risk his money on new ventures or in developing established enterprises, when he stands to lose even if he wins?

The justice of these complaints, one and all, will be denied vigorously by ardent New Dealers. So far from admitting that the tax is responsible for the current recession, it will be contended that the enforced distribution of dividends has materially advanced recovery by the increase of purchasing power. The claim will be made that, instead of being discriminatory, flagrant inequities have been cured by making surtaxes bear equally on all business profits.

How Stockholders Escape Taxes

Between 1923 and 1929, inclusive, more than forty-five per cent of all aggregate compiled net profits of all corporations reporting net taxable income was not distributed, thus enabling stockholders to avoid a sizable portion of their income taxes. A case cited by Treasury officials is that of a corporation that earned a net income of \$6,000,000 in one year, put it all into surplus, and paid a corporation tax of \$700,000. Had it, however, distributed the net income in dividends, one stockholder alone would have been lifted into a bracket where he would have paid the government \$3,500,000 in additional income taxes. Moreover, corporations with a liberal dividend policy were placed at a disadvantage with corporations that chose to pile up surpluses.

It will be disputed flatly that the tax penalizes prudence, and makes it impossible to provide for growth. First of all, the point will be raised that expansion, as practiced in the past, was all too often part of a process of monopolization. Prior to the enactment of the tax, for example, "chains" used income for the purchase of additional stores. Inasmuch as individuals—businessmen and partnerships—were compelled to pay the surtax on every dollar, the exemption of corporations amounted to what was virtually a subsidy.

With respect to legitimate growth, high officials of the Treasury point out that the act specifically recognizes a number of methods whereby a corporation may reduce or eliminate surtaxes without necessarily parting with any of its cash or other assets. For example, the distribution of its current earnings in the form of its own securities, or by recouping cash dividend disbursements by the offering of rights to the stockholders to subscribe for additional stock. Between 1921 and 1930, as an illustration, the American Telephone and Telegraph

Company distributed \$854,000,000 in dividends, and sold additional securities to its stockholders in the sum of \$958,000,000.

This provision for the payment of dividends in other forms than cash is regarded by New Dealers as ample protection against the depletion of reserves. But, they say, even if the full effects of the tax are felt, it does not follow necessarily that the treasury will be left bare. Take the case of a corporation showing a net annual income of \$10,000. If it decided not to distribute a dollar, the tax would be \$2,082, or 20.82 per cent, leaving a balance of \$7,918. On an undistributed net income of \$50,000, the tax would be \$15,163.50, or 30.33 per cent, a balance of \$34,836.50. On a net income of \$1,000,000 the tax would be \$323,327.80, or 32.33 per cent, and the balance \$676,672.20. What more could any corporation want?

Advocates of repeal or revision will doubtless make much of the contention that corporate surpluses built up by the retention of corporate earnings, free

wages, etc., is not usually repaid out of earnings, but out of gross proceeds. Moreover, that such loans are never completely liquidated, but constitute a revolving fund whose aggregate volume has often exceeded the total statutory net income of American corporations.

With respect to bonded and other forms of longer-term indebtedness, representing fixed assets, it will be argued that most large-scale enterprises commonly regard the bulk of such debt as a permanent element in their capital structures, meeting the maturities of particular obligations by refunding them. Substantial reductions are usually accomplished through the conversion of bonds into stocks, and, pending favorable market conditions, particular debt issues are often met by the use of funds accumulated through depreciation and similar charges.

Right here New Dealers will make the point that since the annual depreciation and depletion charges of nonfinancial corporations in the United States amount to four billions, our entire in-

limit of \$2,000 in excess of capital gains. For example, if John Jones makes a profit of \$10,000 on the sale of one batch of securities, and loses \$20,000 on the sale of another block, all that he can deduct is the \$10,000 gain, plus \$2,000, leaving him holding the bag to the extent of \$8,000. Where is there any justice in taxing capital gains while limiting the right to deduct losses?

The fundamental contention will be that capital gains should not be treated as income at all, but merely as additions to capital.

Come Out of the Cellar

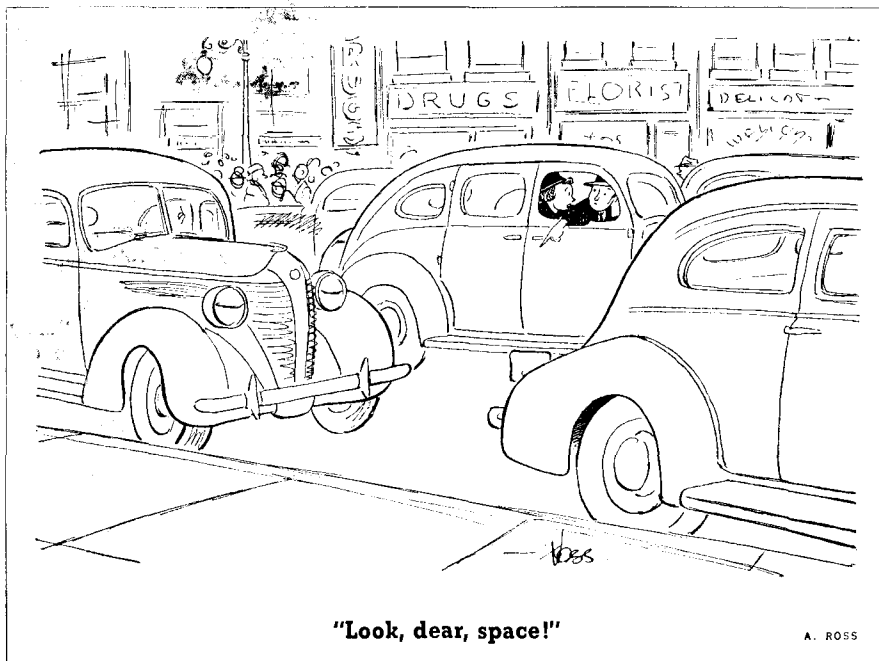
What is likely to be the outcome of the tax battle? With the radicals on one side, and conservatives on the other, the balance of power will undoubtedly be held by the Modificationist block in the New Deal, and after many interviews, this would seem to be a fair statement of their position: All are convinced that the situation is dominated by a psychological factor that cannot be ignored. Granted that the tax policy of government is not as harsh and repressive as businessmen insist, the fact remains that capital does believe implicitly and unchangeably that the policy is restrictive, punitive and paralyzing, and has taken to the storm cellar. The immediate importance is to bring business out of its tailspin, and since finance and industry refuse to budge until tax changes have been made, then the intelligent course is to make them. Better a reduction of revenues that can be counterbalanced by a cut in expenditures than another 1929.

Repeal is not to be expected, but revisions are certain. With respect to capital losses, Mr. Vinson's group has already decided that it is fair to let them be carried over into a second year and possibly a third. As suggested by the President, capital gains derived from investment in the construction industry will go untaxed, for experts agree that it is the only hope for the Administration's housing program.

In the matter of undistributed earnings, exemptions will probably be granted for reasonable amounts actually expended for improvements and necessary expansion and also for moneys set aside to meet contractual obligations or to restore depleted capital. Senator LaFollette has in mind the exemption of the first \$15,000 of adjusted net income, which would permit at least 90 per cent of the corporations of the country to retain profits tax-free.

The law will also be amended so that it shall not apply to the undistributed profits of corporations which have deficits when state laws forbid the distribution of dividends by deficit corporations, or where corporations have contracts with stockholders not to distribute dividends while they have deficits. It is also likely that corporations will be given the right to distribute a fair portion of their adjusted net income within two, three or four months after the close of the fiscal year without loss of the dividends-paid credit.

These changes may be set down as minimums. If, by the time the tax bill is ready, business is still doing a nose dive, a jittery Congress may be expected to go even farther in the way of concessions. As for the broadening of the tax base, as suggested by Senator LaFollette, it hasn't much chance, nor is there large hope for the drive against tax-exempt securities, although the imperative need for revenue may compel some action.



from surtaxes, enabled corporations to maintain employment and pay rolls during the depression. Colonel Leonard Ayres, citing figures of the Department of Commerce to the effect that the national income paid out between 1930 and 1934 exceeded the national income produced by 26.6 billions, argues that this sum represented "the contribution that business savings made to emergency relief during five depression years. These payments, in excess of income, were made possible because surpluses had been accumulated."

By way of answer, the New Dealers will bring forward Lawrence H. Seltzer, Assistant Director of Research and Statistics in the Treasury Department. In studying the aggregate net deficit of all corporations for the three years 1931-1933, Mr. Seltzer finds that the total was reached after deducting some 11.2 billion dollars for depreciation, some 761 millions for depletion, some 3.7 billions for bad debts, and some 5.1 billions for loss on the sale of capital assets. How can it be contended, he asks, that this bookkeeping recognition of unreplaced wear and tear, and of declines in values arising out of other causes, created employment?

Going deeper into the question, Mr. Seltzer will undoubtedly contend that short-term debt, contracted for the purposes of acquiring inventories, paying

dustrial plant could be completely modernized over a term of years even if there were no borrowings, and if all earnings were paid out.

The rebuttal, of course, will be as vigorous as the attack. For example, businessmen will scoff at the theory that stock dividends, rights, etc., are "escapes," pointing out that small and middle-sized corporations are not in a position to use them because of technical obstacles; that there is always the possibility of their being disallowed or discounted in value by the Treasury, and that capital structures would suffer eventual distortion, even should original difficulties of issuance be successfully overcome.

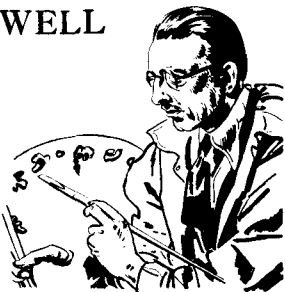
Along with the repeal or drastic revision of the tax on undistributed corporate earnings, industry and finance will make a drive against the capital gains and losses tax. Stringent, indeed, are its provisions. On the returns of individuals, gains on the sales of securities are taxed as follows: 100 per cent if held not more than one year; 80 per cent if held more than one but not more than two years; 60 per cent if held more than two but not more than five years; 40 per cent if held more than five but not more than ten years; and 30 per cent if held more than ten years. Along with these levies, on both corporate and individual returns, losses are recognized only to the

ARTISTIC TYPE

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second we saw each other we knew that it was inevitable. He's coming round to see you tomorrow morning."

Mrs. Kinghorn was sitting up in bed, her hair tousled, her face bound in some strange contraption that made her look as though she were in a hospital after a terrible accident; her eyes shining with excitement; for once she was speechless. She only stared in front of her, holding her daughter's lovely little hand in her own skinny one, and at last she said:

"Since dear Richard died, this is my first really happy moment." And this, of course, was a terrible falsehood. What she meant was that it was the happiest moment of a whole sequence of happy moments. They embraced with great tenderness, and they both lay awake for many hours.

John Haddington appeared the next morning, and was quite as beautiful as Laura said he was. His manners also were perfect, but Laura could perceive that he was astonished at her mother's appearance. She had never disliked her mother more. Why must she do all those odd, silly, exasperating little things—jerking her head, cracking her fingers, being at once so intimate, as though she had known John since he was a baby; taking it so clearly for granted that he was the luckiest man in the world; telling him all kinds of things about Laura as a baby, as a little girl, as a developing beauty; and, finally, folding him to her old bosom and giving him a great smacking kiss on each cheek.

How beautifully John behaved. He laughed, patted Mrs. Kinghorn on the shoulder, and answered her when he had an opportunity in that soft, gentle, rather drawing voice that already had bewitched Laura's heart. But when they were alone at luncheon, Laura did not dare to ask him what he thought of her mother. . . .

Nobody can really tell what goes on in anybody else's head, and generally the owner of the head knows least of all about it. I would not say that Mrs. Kinghorn had no idea of what she was doing. She was certainly rendered a little dizzy by happiness. Happiness blinds; unhappiness reveals. And Mrs. Kinghorn showed to everybody that she was completely unaware of the perils that surrounded her. She took it for granted that, because Laura's young man loved Laura, he must also feel kindly toward Laura's mother.

IN GENERAL she thought that people felt kindly toward her; she felt so kindly toward them that she couldn't realize that the oddities with which she had grown up—oddities that had become so commonplace to herself—were distressing to other people. She liked "her John" extravagantly, and told him so every day. She was always proclaiming her tactfulness.

"Now, I'll leave you two together. You simply don't want an old woman like me hovering around." Then she would wait for a little hard, clear, glassy moment, as though, in spite of herself, she were expecting a denial from them, and when no denial came she would say, a little breathlessly:

"Ah, well. I must be getting about my business," and trot off. Then she couldn't help but just pop her head in a little later to see whether there wasn't anything they would possibly like. With everyone she met she carried a sort of secret joy—secret, that is, as to the cause. Her large mouth grinning, her mild eyes beaming, she forced anyone who encountered her to say, "Why, Mrs. Kinghorn, how wonderfully well you are

Mother's a Pity

Continued from page 11

looking." And then she would nod her head mysteriously and finger her over-gaudy necklace and say, "Yes, I'm very well indeed. I have every reason to be."

She took it entirely for granted that everyone was delighted with her own good luck. What they really said, of course, was, "Poor John," or "Poor Haddington, having such a dreadful mother-in-law. What will he do?"

"It's all the harder on him," somebody said, "because he is such a gentleman. John thinks being a gentleman more important than anything else in the world."

"Oh, well, it's all right," somebody else said. "The moment they are married he will banish his ma most politely into the wilderness, and she is too good a sort to complain."

"You really like that old scarecrow?" somebody else said.

"Yes, I do. She's such a good sort, and that's a thing almost nobody is. It's rare. It's worth studying. She never lets anybody down except herself."

Meanwhile, with Laura, of course, things became every day more difficult. The worse her mother behaved the more wonderful John seemed. A week or two after their engagement Laura delivered once again her ancient summary, "Mother's a pity." She paused, and added: "I know, John darling, I oughtn't to say it—it's a dreadful thing. But we're going to share everything, aren't we? And you are so wonderful about her."

"You oughtn't to say that, darling," he replied, gravely. "There's something a little—well, you won't mind my saying it, will you?—well, a little cheap. After all, your mother has been wonderfully good to you."

"That's what makes it so dreadful," Laura said,—"her goodness. If she tied me to the bedpost and beat me, every-

thing would be perfectly simple. The awful thing, John, is—I can't bear her happiness. I feel as though she were happier than we, although of course that's impossible."

He kissed her and held her close to him with that splendid courteous ardor which was so especially his.

"Hold me tight, hold me tight," she whispered. "I don't know why—I'm frightened. I love you so terribly, John."

"And I you, darling," he answered. "And now I must go down into the City and see about those tiresome shares of mine."

HE LEFT her often unsatisfied, and the more unsatisfied she was, the more she loved him, which, as everybody who has ever been in love knows, is only natural. It was terrible for her to go, thus unsatisfied, back to her mother, whose total satisfaction was so triumphant.

Mrs. Kinghorn would be so desperately tactful that she wouldn't say a word; would push her long nose into a book and pretend to be completely absorbed. Then, in spite of herself, she would give little quick flashing glances at her daughter, smiling ever so slightly, as much as to say, "I'm taking the greatest care not to interrupt or interfere. But I just can't help showing from time to time how terribly happy I am." And then one evening there was a little scene. Laura suddenly snapped out:

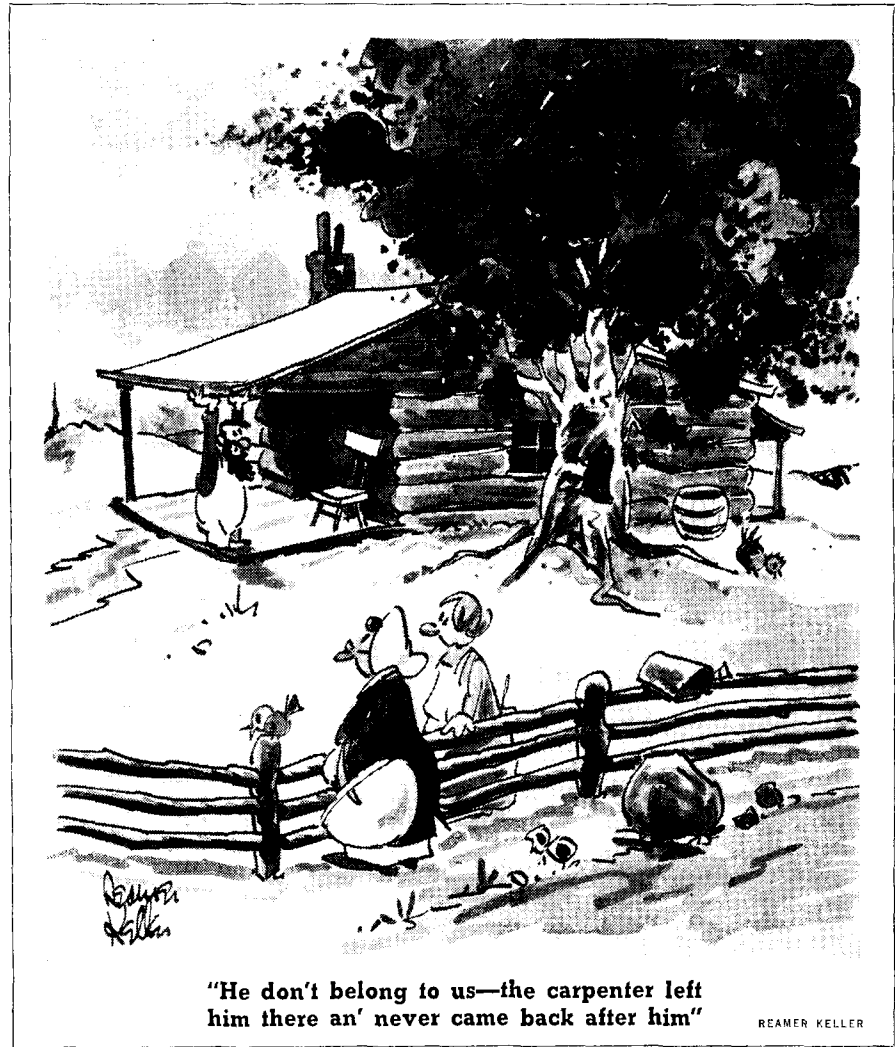
"Please don't keep on looking at me, Mother." And Mrs. Kinghorn, with a frightened, startled expression, said:

"I'm not looking at you, darling, I'm reading my book."

"Oh, no, you're not. You are watching me all the time."

"Watching you, dearie? What should I be watching you for?"

"I don't know. That's what's so maddening."



"He don't belong to us—the carpenter left him there an' never came back after him"

REAMER KELLER

"I'll go upstairs if you'd rather."
"Oh, no, of course not. I'm going out soon."

Then Mrs. Kinghorn said quietly, "It's quite natural."

"What is?" asked Laura.

"That I should irritate you both. Don't think I don't understand."

"There's nothing to understand," Laura cried, exasperated to madness, jumping to her feet. "Only we can't escape you, John and I. It's a dreadful feeling that somebody is watching you every minute of the day and night."

"Don't I know it?" said Mrs. Kinghorn, cheerfully. "It was just the same with me when I was engaged to Richard. Richard's mother meant well, and I mean well, but until you're married you'll find me tiresome. The sooner you're married the better."

"What are you going to do then?" asked Laura.

"Oh, I'll be all right. Don't you worry about me." She pushed her skinny hand through her short sunset hair. "Don't you worry about me, darling. I'll be quite all right in some little place by myself."

Laura, in a perfect passion, answered, "Oh, why will you be so good and so self-sacrificing? Why don't you say something mean or spiteful?"

Mrs. Kinghorn answered placidly, "I dare say I could be mean and spiteful if I tried. Most women can," and went on with her book.

THE odd result of this was that Laura couldn't get rid of the idea that after their marriage her mother would be very lonely. She didn't want to feel this. Her mother was perfectly able to look after herself; but it would be lonely for her, whatever she did, and although Laura longed to be rid of her she longed to be rid of her comfortably. She talked about this to John.

"Of course, she won't live with us, darling. That would be too horrible. But you won't mind her coming to stay once and again, will you?"

For a swift moment John's beautiful, kindly courtesy seemed to waver. The moment was gone as soon as it came.

"Your mother? Why, of course she shall stay with us. You owe her everything."

"But, John, tell me honestly. Don't you find her maddening?"

"Oh, well, of course she isn't quite like other people, but I can never forget all she has done for you."

"But, in your heart of hearts, don't you hate her?"

"Oh, no. I shouldn't say that."

"What I really mean is, doesn't she make you uncomfortable and shy and awkward?"

"I hope nothing connected with you could ever make me shy and uncomfortable, darling," he answered. "And now we must part for a while. I've got to talk business with a man at the club."

There came then the evening when they gave a party. The day of the wedding was now only a month away. It was Mrs. Kinghorn's absolute resolve to give a party. She insisted too that it should be given in their little flat. Of course, that was crazy and yet when things were cleared away there was, in some miraculous fashion, room for about thirty people. They asked only twenty, and fifty came. Neither Mrs. Kinghorn nor Laura had ever seen half their guests before.

It would have grown into a dreadful, irresponsible sort of riot had it not been for John. He, in the most marvelous way, took command of everything. It was he who had paid for the drinks, and it was he who saw that nobody drank too much. It was he who, halfway through the party, pushed a young man and his girl quietly to the door and showed them into the street. It was he

who, when a young woman whose clothes and hair gave her the shiny, mechanical appearance of a gasoline station, said loudly, "Oh, do look at that frightful old woman; what's she doing here?" said to her, "In a month's time that lady will be my mother-in-law. Would you mind telling me your name and why you are here?" The gasoline-station woman was very indignant and said that she had been brought by So-and-So. "Very well then," John said briefly, "behave yourself."

The odd thing was that although the party was better run than any that the Kinghorns had ever given, it was really less successful than any other. John rallied so well that everyone left quite early, with little hurried, frightened remarks, like, "It's been so jolly; thanks so awfully much," and all of them vanished rather like rabbits before a gun. From the party onward John felt a sort of schoolmasterish sternness. It was just, Laura knew, what she needed, and she admired John for it, but it made her terribly restless.

What was interesting, however, was that John failed altogether with Mrs. Kinghorn. He played the schoolmaster once or twice and then never again. He began by saying with a jolly laugh, "Now, you dear old woman, away to bye-byes. Time for people like you to be asleep, you know." This Mrs. Kinghorn received with wide-open surprise. She was carrying So-So in her arms at the moment, and all she said was, almost sotto voce, to the Pekingese, "He thinks it's time for us to go to bed, darling. How wrong he is."

John was a little baffled by this, and made no further attempt for a week or so. Then, when they were discussing things to be bought for the wedding and John said to Laura, "All right, I'll meet you, darling, at 3:20 outside Asprey's," Laura, looking rather frightened, murmured something about having promised to go with her mother to Harrod's.

"Oh, no, you don't," said John with radiant cheerfulness. "It's the only hour I can spare. I know you'll understand, won't you, you all-comprehending woman?" But Mrs. Kinghorn wasn't comprehending at all.

"You can join us at Harrod's, John, if you like," she said; "but to Harrod's Laura and I are going." And they went.

John's third attempt was killed right at the beginning.

"Look here, John," Mrs. Kinghorn suddenly said. "You're a nice boy and kind, but just lack something—I don't know what it is. Perhaps it's simply that you don't understand me. I know I'm an ugly, absurd old woman, but I happen to be Laura's mother. After the wedding I vanish; until then—well, I'm Laura's mother."

IT WAS now ten days before the wedding, and John was as sweet about Mrs. Kinghorn as ever he had been. It was Laura who abused her; who told her to her face that she would be glad to be married so as to be rid of her; who always contradicted every piece of advice her mother gave her, and altogether behaved abominably. John told her so.

"I understand and love you, darling," he said. "It's other people who think it's so dreadful."

"I don't care," Laura answered. "She's just incredibly tiresome."

And now arrives the strange part of my story; so strange that my only defense is to say that it is true. It was three days before the wedding. Everything was settled and arranged. Mrs. Kinghorn had gone to bed after an awful row with her daughter—had gone to bed, it must be admitted, quite imperceptibly. When the door was closed behind her, Laura said:

"Mother a pity? She's a downright

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horror, and I don't mind who hears me say so."

John, so handsome and noble that he looked as though a statue had been put up to him before his time, said quietly:

"Darling, it's three days to the wedding, isn't it?"

"Why, of course, you know that."

"Yes, I only wanted to make quite certain." He got up, throwing his head up as though he were about to address an already favorable constituency.

"Well, as it's only three days, let me say that every word that you have ever breathed about that old woman is correct. She's absolutely frightful, and we're never going to set eyes on her again once we're married."

Laura stared at him wildly. John smiled at her with benevolence.

"Yes, I know, dear, I had to keep the thing up through our engagement. After all, people do watch one—how one behaves and so on. I think I've done pretty well; not even you have guessed how I loathed that old woman the moment I set eyes on her, and with justice. She is already beginning to make me the laughing stock of London."

Laura still stared at him, fascinated. "You think that about Mother?" she said at last.

"Certainly I do. I have always thought that about Mother; and I can't tell you what a relief it has been to me that you have felt the same."

"But I don't feel the same," Laura said, in a low, wondering voice. She didn't know what was happening to her. She didn't believe in ghosts, of course, but it appeared to her that a funny little woman, with rather nice eyes but a ridiculous nose and mouth, was standing just opposite her, waiting for her to come to her. John Haddington, on the other hand, seemed like that caricature Thackeray once made of Louis XIV—an elegant suit of clothes with nobody inside it. John looked at his beautiful girl, and looked at her with so complete a sense of possession that he might just have paid the bill for her and placed her in the right position in his new elegant drawing room.

"HOW sweet you are," he said. "Even now you'd try and say something for that horrible old lady, but I know you've been nervous, thinking I rather liked her and would want her to come and stay with us after we were married."

Laura looked across the room at the ghost of her mother, through whose meager bones the electric light was brilliantly shining, and then said, "She isn't horrible. I didn't know you felt like that."

"But, good heavens," John said, "you've attacked her yourself again and again."

"I haven't attacked her," Laura said. "I've only been irritated by her, which is quite different." And she saw herself skipping along a seashore, crying out, "Mother, Mother, see what I've found," and the little grotesque figure so seriously examining the pale pink shells and saying, "That's lovely, darling. They're the nicest we've found this week." And then John's voice: "Look here, don't be silly, Laura. Your mother's a grotesque. You know it as well as I do."

"She isn't," said Laura quietly. "There's nobody ever been so kind to me in all my life."

John's voice became a little querulous: "My dear, you are crazy. Nobody's saying she isn't kind; she's too odd to be anything else. I'm only saying that we're both agreed about not seeing much of her after—"

Laura broke in, "We're not agreed! We're not agreed at all! I don't believe we're agreed on anything." And she saw the little figure blow its large nose as it finished reading the account of Guy's

death in "The Heir of Redclyffe" and saw the small child herself, her plaited plaits of hair hanging down; she sitting up in bed also crying and saying, "Oh, Mother, it's terrible. Why did he have to die?"

John, meanwhile, was getting a little angry. Then he said, brusquely, "You're tired. I know what you really feel about your mother."

And suddenly Laura screamed and sprang into the middle of the floor, her eyes flashing—not as they do in novels, but really flashing.

"I'm not tired. You don't know how I feel. I may have laughed at Mother lots of times and said unkind things but I love her and I'm not going to have anyone else running her down."

John was furious. "But this is hysteria. Please control yourself. All I said about your mother—"

"I know what you said about my mother," Laura answered. "You've been mocking her all the time; you've been worse than I. I've been irritated and said things, but you have thought things and haven't said them. That's much worse, and I see now that that's what you would do if we were married. Mother and I are natural. We can't help saying what we think, but you're not natural."

"Not natural!" cried John, to whom this was the last possible insult. "I suppose there's nobody so natural—" then he broke off. "But this is preposterous; we're behaving like children. I'll see you at lunch tomorrow."

"You won't see me at lunch tomorrow," Laura cried. "Mother and I don't ever want to see you again."

John's voice was as cold as a refrigerator. "Do you know what this means?"

"Of course I know what it means. I would never be happy married to you, and I'm not going to have Mother laughed at by anybody."

"Very well, then, it's goodbye."

"Yes, it's goodbye. And take care whose mother you insult next time."

"But, of course," he thought, as he walked proudly down the street, "it's only a moment's bad temper. Every girl gets hysterical before her wedding day."

He was wrong. Laura had rushed upstairs and found her mother comfortably in bed reading a novel.

"Well, dear? Had a nice time?"

"I'm not going to marry him."

"You're what?"

"I hate him. He's a prig and a liar."

She burst into tears. She threw her arms round her mother and hugged the breath out of her. "He said awful things about you. He said we were never to see you after we were married."

"Well, dear," said Mrs. Kinghorn, very placidly, "that's what you yourself have said lots of times."

"Oh, but that was different. I didn't mean it—or only for the moment. You're part of my life. Besides," between her sobs, "I saw suddenly that he had no sense of humor. He would never understand when one was silly or ugly or ill—not as you do."

"Well, there," said Mrs. Kinghorn comfortably, "you'll think differently about it in the morning. All the same," she added, as she kissed her daughter, "the more I have seen of him the less I have liked him, although of course I wasn't going to say so."

SEVERAL weeks later Mrs. Kinghorn was enjoying her luncheon in Garnett's Stores after buying some very bright and hideous ribbon for a new hat she was contemplating. She "got into conversation," as they say, with another lady, and of all the astonishing coincidences—and life is full of coincidences—this lady mentioned Mrs. Kinghorn and her daughter.

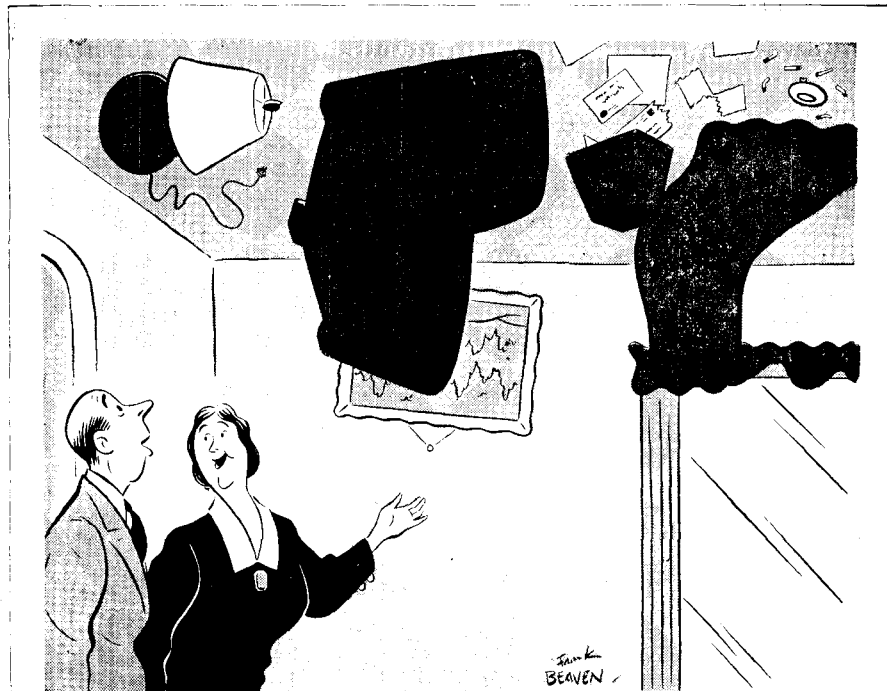
"I don't know if you know them," she said. "I don't, but of course I read about the girl breaking off her engagement to Sir John Haddington."

"Yes," said Mrs. Kinghorn, hugely enjoying her meringue. "What a pity, wasn't it?"

"Well," said the other lady, "I understand from my friend that it was all because of the girl's dreadful old mother—a fright and an oddity, and the poor young man simply couldn't stand it. so he cried off at the last moment, and I'm sure I don't blame him."

"Yes," said Mrs. Kinghorn, "I heard the same story. I believe the girl's mother's a pity. But there you are; I always take the long view about these things. The girl's a nice girl, they say, and probably one day she'll marry a young man who won't mind the mother. After all, they can always poison her, you know," said she, laughing heartily, "if they find her too impossible. There are lots of good poisons now, I believe. You simply can't detect anything afterward."

"Yes, quite," said the other lady, nervously, and got up in a sort of terror. Mrs. Kinghorn delightedly finished her meringue.



"The people upstairs have a wonderful new vacuum cleaner!"

FRANK BEAVEN

Straight Shooter

Continued from page 20

one-handed shots from any angle. He shoots equally well with the right hand or the left hand and some of his most spectacular goals have been made as he was half falling away from the basket under the impact of stiff guarding.

Out of the 51 points made in that Southern California game mentioned above, Luisetti was responsible for thirty of them. In the play-off at Pullman, Washington, last year against Washington State for the Coast championship, Luisetti made 53 points in two nights, under the greatest pressure. In the second game of the play-offs, with the score tied, a Washington State player practically annihilated Hank in keeping him from making a shot. He was knocked flat and appeared to be injured. John Bunn, the coach, rushed out to look at him and arrived just as Hank was raising himself and getting ready to try for the foul.

"Bet you a buck I make it, John," said Hank, and Mr. Bunn went on back to the bench where he belonged. It turned out that Hank missed it.

Death to All Defenses

This was also the game in which Dinty Moore, the Stanford captain, almost faced death. Mr. Moore was given to humor in tense spots. This was to be his last game of college basketball and he was having too much fun to end so soon. Stanford was two points ahead with a minute to play and there was time out.

"I'll tell you what let's do," said Mr. Moore. "Let's let 'em make a basket and tie it up. I want to play some more."

The Stanford boys had much enjoyment out of their pastime and everybody was happy but Mr. Bunn, who had a family to keep. His worst difficulty was in getting Luisetti to shoot enough. After much exasperation on this score, Mr. Bunn reared himself up on the side lines one night and screamed: "Hank, if you pass that ball once more, I'll come out there and brain you. For God's sake, shoot it!"

What they want to impress upon you out at Palo Alto is that Hank Luisetti is not just a freak shot. They insist, and evidence seems to bear them out, that he is one of the greatest ball-handlers and floor-workers ever seen among the college gentlemen. Don Liebendorfer, the publicity man, will relate with uncouth smacking of the lips the incident which concerns Wagner, the great dribbler from the University of Washington. Wagner was coming down the floor full tilt in a close game when Luisetti met him. Wagner swerved to the right, with the intention of wheeling back to the left as soon as Hank started to cut him off.

"But Hank sensed it almost before Wagner doped it out in his own head," says Mr. Liebendorfer reverently. "When Wagner started to the right, Hank just waited for him. The minute he swerved back, Hank stepped in, took the ball out of Wagner's hands and, without missing stride, dribbled it right on down to the Washington basket and dumped it in."

With Howie Turner doing the feeding and Luisetti galloping all over the floor, Stanford was death to all defenses last year. If the opponents took their five men and huddled back under their own basket, Stanford simply dropped them in from the middle of the floor as if they were tied to strings. If the defense came out to meet this, Stanford sent Luisetti and Stoefen through and that meant more disaster.

Hank's father is cook in a little res-

taurant in San Francisco and Hank is the only child. Hank was bothered somewhat in Buffalo by a man who seemed to be on familiar terms with all the Italians of the earth. Whenever he met Hank he would cry: "How is De Mahg and Tony Laz and Crosset and all the boys?" As a matter of fact, Hank knows them only slightly because he is a kid in such important company. He belongs to the "Dekes" at Stanford, waits on table at the fraternity house for his board and room, picks up five bucks a Saturday during football season acting as messenger in the press box and gets the rest of his money during summer vacation. Last year he worked in the mines in Nevada, got hardened from the labor and dragged down four dollars a day. In the fall he went in to the medico's office at Stanford to say he had a belly-ache and before he could get out of the place they had him on the operating table removing his appendix.

"It was a dirty trick," says Hank, "but they'd been laying for me. It had kicked up before."

Two weeks later he was out for practice. They began basketball workouts at Stanford this year on October 5th, with the first game scheduled for December 6th. The old days when the football players were also the basketball stars are almost over, both because the seasons tend to overlap (especially true on the West Coast, where the Rose Bowl game is likely to interfere) and also because it is a much faster game these days. There are still huskies like Herwig of California around to bounce fresh young forwards into the second balcony with a slight flick of the hip, but for the most part the sports keep apart.

The country is full of great players and such men as Jack Robbins of Arkansas, Johnny Moir of Notre Dame and Kessler, late of Purdue, were most certainly in Luisetti's class and there will be voices to shout that they were even greater. Moir's great record of scoring includes twenty-five points made against Pitt during a game in his sophomore year.

Maker of Coaches

Mr. Luisetti is quite modest about his playing ability. He says that when this year is over he is going to throw his shoes into a locker and forget about the game. No professional basketball, says Hank. He proclaims further that he didn't know anything about the game when he hit Stanford, has learned everything in his four-year college career and is willing to let it go at that. He says John Bunn taught him everything he knows and that Howie Turner fed him the easy ones so he could run up all those points.

Mr. Turner was not around to comment but Mr. Bunn could be reached for a statement. Mr. Bunn is a frank man and an honest man, tending to be a trifle on the ironic side.

"You remember those great baseball teams Connie Mack used to have when he won all those pennants?" asks Mr. Bunn. "Well, then you'll remember those other Connie Mack teams when he waved that score card of his just as hard as ever and the Athletics were in last place for about ten years all the same. I've had Stanford on trips for several years back and if we won three out of ten we were lucky. So do you want to know something? I'll let you in on a little secret. Hank Luisetti is the young man who made a coach out of John Bunn. He'd make a coach out of anybody."

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said thickly. "Stabbed in de back!"

In four strides Lee was at Kenman's side. He laid his hand on the man's shoulder, looking for a moment at the bronze handle of a heavy knife whose blade had been buried in Harper Kenman's heart. He shook Kenman's inert form. "This man is dead!" he announced. "Dead as hell!"

Forgetting his wounded arm, James Lee reached for the telephone. . . .

Within three minutes the siren of a police car wailed to silence in front of Kenman's residence.

James Lee spoke to Walter Shore. "Front door locked?"

"Yes, Mr. Lee."

"Open the door. Let the police in."

Voices in the hallway. "Here, this door to your right," Walter Shore directed.

Two police officers came into the library. James Lee introduced himself. He pointed to the dead man. "Mr. Kenman has been murdered," he said.

Sergeant Scott nodded toward Moy Hop. "What's that Chink doing with the gun there?" he asked.

"Working for me. . . . One of you officers take over for him, will you?" Then to Moy Hop, "Bring me a glass of water," he said in Cantonese.

Moy Hop left the library, to return in a moment with a silver tray on which rested a glass of water. "Could I get you a glass of wine?"

"Thank you, no." James Lee gulped his glass of water and again reached for the telephone. He called Leslie Wagner's residence. "Were you successful?" he asked when he heard Wagner's voice. "Yes."

"Quick work. Come over to Kenman's residence right away." Lowering his voice so that no one in the room might hear, "Bring the bracelet with you," he whispered. "Get that?"

"I heard you," Wagner answered. "I'll see you in five minutes."

COINCIDENT with Leslie Wagner's arrival, Lieutenant Ward of the homicide squad and two plain-clothes men reached the Kenman residence.

Entering the library, Lieutenant Ward nodded to Sergeant Scott. Then, seeing James Lee, whose arm at the moment was being bandaged by Walter Shore, "Who got you, Mr. Lee?" he asked.

"I don't know," James Lee said.

Lieutenant Ward spoke to one of his men. "Take my car and get a surgeon over here from Emergency for Mr. Lee." Turning to James Lee, "Kenman dead?"

"He's dead," James Lee replied.

To another man, "Phone the coroner," Lieutenant Ward directed. "Then get old Hoofprints up here with his camera. . . . You got any ideas, Mr. Lee?"

Walter Shore had completed his first aid. With Shore's help James Lee got his wounded arm into the sleeve of his coat before he replied. "Yes," he said to Lieutenant Ward. With his right hand James Lee reached into his vest pocket and pulled out a slip of paper. "Fourteen C O 15," he read aloud.

"What's that?" Ward asked.

"It's the classification on the fingers of somebody's left hand—the Wagner jewel robbery. . . . Lieutenant, do you know Mr. Wagner here? He's the proprietor of the jewelry store."

"I've met Mr. Wagner," Lieutenant Ward said.

"I'm working for him," James Lee announced.

Ward smiled grimly. "Good luck—but what about this dead man here? What have you got on this job?"

Without replying at the moment,

The Eye of Heaven

Continued from page 29

James Lee turned and let his slow glance range from Jelvik to Battley. He smiled significantly at Moy Hop.

Jelvik muttered an incoherent oath. Scowling sideways at the man, Battley suddenly snarled at him. "Damn your eyes, Jelvik! Hold it, you blighter!"

Now, answering Lieutenant Ward's question, "I haven't anything definite—so far," James Lee lighted a cigarette. "I may get you something—in a few minutes."

When the ash on his cigarette was a quarter of an inch long, James Lee reached for a sheet of note paper that lay on the desk. He flicked the cigarette ash upon this paper. For a moment with the index finger of his right hand he ground the cigarette ash into a fine powder. He folded the notepaper, collecting the ash in the grooved trough of the fold.

He reached across the desk then for the silver tray on which Moy Hop had brought him the glass of water. Over a spot on the polished surface of the tray where the faint print of Moy Hop's thumb had dimmed the luster of the polished metal, he shook half of the pulverized cigarette ash. Delicately, with a silk handkerchief he brushed the cigarette ash back and forth over the thumbprint for a moment. Then, with an eight-power lens he inspected the faint pattern that the gray ash had revealed. "Fourteen," he said half aloud.

"Old Hoofprints will be here in a few minutes, Mr. Lee," Lieutenant Ward suggested. "He's got all the gear for that work."

James Lee smiled at Lieutenant Ward. "Thank you," he said. He turned the silver tray bottom up and on the faint oval areas where the brilliant silver had been dulled by three fingers of Moy Hop's left hand he shook the remains of the pulverized cigarette ash. After a concentrated inspection he put his lens back in his pocket and pushed the silver tray away from him. "Fourteen C O 15."

To Lieutenant Ward, "You may arrest Moy Hop for the Wagner robbery," he said. More distinctly in the turmoil of voices that suddenly filled the long room, "Bring Moy Hop over here. It is probable that he will also confess the murder of Harper Kenman."

James Lee turned quickly to Leslie

Wagner. "Let me have the Cuboni bracelet, please," he said.

When Moy Hop faced James Lee, speaking Cantonese, "There is a last step to every journey," James Lee said. "You are the thief for whom we search! You killed your master! Confess!"

Moy Hop was silent. There were beads of perspiration on his brow.

"Look!" James Lee continued. He reached into his vest pocket and tossed the eight-carat rectangular paste diamond that he had borrowed from Wagner's collection on the desk in front of Moy Hop. "You boasted of your memory—but here you slipped. The original of this stone is nowhere in this bracelet. You remembered it, however, not from the bracelet—but from the other trophies of your theft."

AFTER a pause: "My master forced me to the evil deed," Moy Hop said. "First the opium that we brought in—he gave me not one cent of my share—then the jewels. And still I served in poverty."

"Where are the jewels?"

"I have them—here." From a twisted silk girdle that he wore next to his skin, Moy Hop produced the jewelry and the unset gems that he had stolen.

There were five seconds of silence. Then, "I killed the man," Moy Hop confessed. "He was a genius of evil enterprise. I was his humble servant."

"Right!" James Lee turned to Lieutenant Ward. "Moy Hop killed Kenman. He's ready to go with you."

Speaking pidgin, "Policee man no ketchum Moy Hop," the killer contradicted. "Moy Hop go now; stay long time." He whipped out a short-barreled .38. The first shot reached his heart. "A last step to every journey," he whispered, smiling at James Lee until the sardonic grin of death replaced his smile.

In the silence that followed the shot, "Well, damn my eyes!" Battley grated. "Mr. Lee, that murder'ous devil is prob'ly the blighter that winged you!"

James Lee nodded wearily. "No doubt of it, Battley," he said. Then, to Lieutenant Ward, "I'm sorry, Lieutenant—my foot slipped a bit on this job." He looked down at the dead Moy Hop. "Poor devil—perhaps he has regained the Middle Pathway."



"... an' lately he was all-a-time complaining . . . this didn't suit him . . . that didn't suit him . . ."

JAY IRVING

Bat Out of Hell

Continued from page 26

... up ... too far! A scream from the stand. A tearing, ripping sound. The black slug had shot over the rim.

"He started to climb too late," Barr said.

The news beat us to the top. No fatalities. One broken arm. It didn't seem to bother Sandy. "What was the matter?" she asked me.

"They started to climb too late."

"No, no, no. What happened to you?" she asked impatiently. "Don't you realize you've got to beat Kivian? Where did you brake?"

She listened and then said to Sid, "I want to speak to you," and took him aside. We listened to the returns. Kivian had not been able to beat his record. The sled before us had pushed off. Sandy came back with Sid's goggles but without Sid.

"Where is he?" I asked impatiently, for it was time to line up.

"On his way to the Whiteface stand," Sandy said. "I'm taking his place."

"But why?" Barr asked. "You've refused all along on account of your weight."

"Weight isn't everything," she said. "I'm riding. I think I've deserved it."

SHE looked indomitable standing there like that. The name of that statue came back to me. The Winged Victory, of course. Well, she was due her thrill as reward, and there wasn't time to argue, anyway. The loud-speaker was announcing us, "Bat Out of Hell on the line. ... Track clear. ..."

"You shoving, Sandy?" I asked.

"Certainly, I'm shoving. ... And you're steering ... for your life." Simultaneously came the sled's surge. In an instant the Bat was dropping like something that lightning had taken for a taxi.

Eyrie slapped me in the face before it was possible. But I took it right and we tore around and down into the straightaway again with a roar that went up your spine. She'll get her thrill. I thought. Despite the wind stream, I could hear Sandy stroking ... one, two, bob! ... one, two, bob! ... And at each bob the Bat hurled us faster still, down the polished groove.

Suddenly Whiteface reared its hair-pin threat ahead. A comet corner with a wall as high as a house. I'd never hit the blue Gibraltar at this speed. As I caught the yellow disk, I shouted "Brake!"

But no brakes answered. No time to think, only to steer. The sled projected frantically toward the rim. I had a blurred glimpse of brown—the stands—and zoomed headlong back into the straight with madly increased momentum. My heart settled back in place, and a fire poured along my taut nerves. We were through by the grace of God. But why no brakes? Had they jammed? What would happen at Shady Corner?

I gripped the wheel. I mustn't let on to panic. And all at once I became aware of ... one, two, bob! ... one, two, bob! As if we weren't going fast enough! Sandy must be mad.

The track crossed a cliff and I could look into the valley a thousand feet below. A control tower pinged by. I knew that place. Shady Corner in a moment. "Brake!" I yelled. "Brake!"

No brakes. Instead came that swinging command ... one, two, bob! ... one, two, bob! Were they all insane?

With a hammering roar we were hurled up the twenty-foot wall. For a millionth of a second one runner paralleled the rim and the white faces watching. But the blue disk flashed and we were in the

trough again. Saved by some miracle of the engineers.

This straightaway was velvet-covered lightning. The Bat threw herself down it at maximum speed. And yet still I heard that maddening one, two, bob! ... one, two, bob! It was beyond something to curse at. All my blood and body seemed to flow to a point ahead. Zigzag. But I felt calm, as if already dead. I knew no sled could manage the terrific one-two of those left and right turns at that speed. As we lurched downward into the stomach-lifting fall that was to send us into that hellish razzle-dazzle, it was habit that made me yell for brakes. I didn't expect them. Dimly I heard a voice, Barr's, screaming "Brake! Brake! Damn you ... Brake!"

It was all instinct now, all training now. The furious shock drove us high. Habit and hell contended for my wheel. I just sat there, braced, while the sled shot from the smooth bore of the left wall. The ice jumped away. The opposite wall caught us. Again the sled tried to escape into the air, the trees. The world seemed to turn over, blindingly white. I felt that sickening skid and squeezed the wheel ... and there, over us, was the sky, where it ought to be. We were still on the track. Still burning through the air. Out. Safe. ... Crossing the line. And then, then, I felt the brakes go on, heard them tear the ice and bring us to a stop.

"Thank God!" Barr groaned and drooped limply on my shoulder. I crawled out from under the wheel in a daze. Far away a hoarse voice called, "Bat Out of Hell. 50.77 seconds."

It didn't penetrate at first. Then I knew. Someone ran up and began pounding me on the back. Others swarmed up, and I fought them off on my way to Sandy. There was something I had to ask.

She'd taken off her goggles and the wind tossed the gold of her hair. "Good work, Sam! We did it! We did it!" she said.

"And how!" I said, trying to speak slowly. "What was the matter? Brakes stuck?"

"Of course not!"

"Then you did that on purpose?"

"Why, of course! And we won, didn't we?"

"Thanks," I said.

I TWISTED away into the crowd and bumped into Kivian. He started to congratulate me. It made me sick. I broke through the last ring of fools, and there stood Hannah! The sight of her calmed me some. "I thought you weren't coming, Han," I said.

"I had to, Sam," she said. Her face was very pale.

"Why, you're crying," I said.

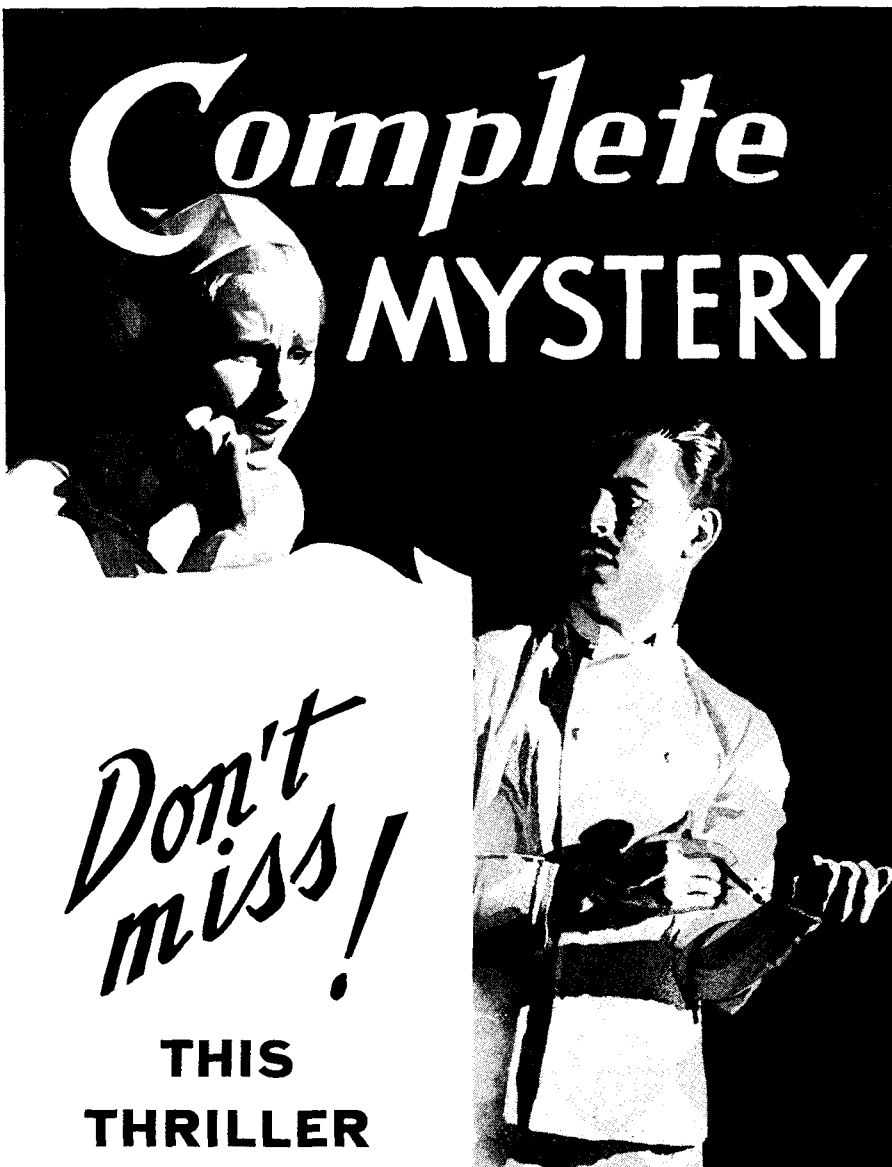
"Sup ... suppose you had been killed," she said, and turned so that I shouldn't see her.

I swung her around to me and held her so that the tears wouldn't freeze on her cheeks. Or maybe for another reason. "Why, you poor chipmunk, killing's all I deserve," I said. I didn't care who saw us there, but soon she began pulling away.

"I mustn't keep you from Sandy," she said.

"Sandy and I don't live in the same world, Han," I said. "I had to die to find it out. I was dead for fifty seconds. But now I'm resurrected, sweetheart. And if all the reports are true, this must be heaven."

It was wonderful looking into her eyes, deeper, and deeper. "They ... they are true, Sam," she said.



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This is My Love Song

Continued from page 15

coming. And it seemed that he'd known,
always, that it had to come.

"I caught Sharron's work, and I think
she's a good bet," Carlisle said quietly.
"I've got a spot I can put her in—unless
you've got her under contract."

"Why, I thought the whole band was
going." Low, husky words. "Tony, I
wouldn't have done this to you for any-
thing."

He said, "Skip it," his dark eyes go-
ing from her face to Carlisle's. "What
about the band?"

Carlisle shook his head. "Sorry."
"That lets the band out. What kind
of a spot have you got for—for her?"
"Benny Marks needs a vocalist."

Benny Marks! Carlisle had known,
damn him, what that name would do.
He'd casually tossed the key to the mint
between them, and now all he had to
do was wait. A name band against a
bunch of drunks; the big time against
the bushes; the Royal Bowl against a
remodeled skating rink. . . .

"But I couldn't," Sharron said in a
swift, choked voice. "I couldn't leave
the band."

"That's up to you," Carlisle answered.

He was smart. Tony thought, too
smart, and he had everything on his
side. They were both looking at him
now—waiting.

"No." Tony's hand trembled against
her arm. "You're not staying. Can't you
see that, Sharron? This is your big
chance; this is the way up."

"But we'd planned, remember? We'd
promised to stick together till the break
came."

"This won't change anything," Tony
said huskily. "We'll be up there one of
these days, and you can come back to
my band. You've got to go, Sharron;
if you don't it'll always be between us."

"Maybe it wouldn't be for long." She
looked away. "Your chance'll come,
you—"

He met Carlisle's gray eyes, inscru-
table behind shimmering lenses. "When
do you want her?"

"I'm driving back tonight; she can
ride with me."

"Right!" He managed a smile.
"Come on, I'll help you pack, Sharron."

BITTER bright moments then, rushing
swiftly away. They laughed, too
much, and jammed things into her worn
bag. He kept the strained smile and
tried to talk, but she was already far-
away. She was thinking of the Royal
Bowl, of smart crowds, of lights and
laughter, of Benny Marks' suave music.

Tony walked down the hall with
them. Carlisle turned to offer his hand.
"You play a lot of trumpet, son, but
that isn't enough. The saxes are weak,
and . . ."

"I know," Tony interrupted: "it's
corny." The faint light caught the un-
smiling planes of his face. "You told
me. I've got a corny band; let it go at
that."

Carlisle nodded soberly. "The car's
parked near the corner. I'll go ahead."
He walked swiftly away, his heels strik-
ing hollow echoes from the walk.

"You shouldn't have done that, Tony;
you might make him mad."

"I'm not askin' him for a thing." The
fixed grin pulled at his lips. "Okay, you
tell him I'm sorry."

The moment stretched thin and sweet
between them. He knew there should
be words for this, light and funny words.
but he had only a tight ache in his
throat. How do you put memories, and
music, and the thing that's tangled up
in your life into a phrase? How do you
say goodbye?

"Maybe I shouldn't go." She stirred
restlessly. "I'm not sure, Tony. Maybe
I won't go over. Maybe I ought to stay
with you and the band. Maybe—" her
head dropped. "Maybe you can't treat
love this way."

He swallowed, cupped his palm un-
der her chin. "Why not, hon? We'll be
together before long. You'll be a ter-
rific hit. I'm the lucky guy, I'm goin'
to marry you, and you'll sing in my band
for nothing."

"Sure, Tony. But I'm—I'm afraid
something will happen to us."

"He's waiting."

"Look. I'll write every day. I'll tell
you all about everything, and I'll . . ."

He kissed her, holding her close for
a long moment, and then pushed her
gently toward the door. She ran, her
voice coming back to him out of the
night, "I'll write. . . ."

A WEEK later the Pavilion manager
called Tony to the office. "You're a
nice guy," he said, "but . . ."

"I know." The stiffness was riding
Tony's shoulders again. "We're through."

"Yes. Tonight." The manager turned
to his paper.

The band folded a week later.

The Billboard and The Downbeat
each mentioned it, and Sharron's let-
ters were full of questions. The floor
around the table in Tony's bedroom was
littered with false starts before he
finally wrote. ". . . I'm starting a new
band, but I've come to the conclusion
that I need a little more experience. I'm
going to play first trumpet with Hamp-
ton's outfit. Glad to hear that you're
going over big, but I knew you
would. . . ."

First trumpet for Hampton. The road
again. Hampton, sleek and smiling, tak-

ing the bows with a top hat canted over
one ear like a second-rate Ted Lewis.
Hampton at rehearsal, saying smugly:
"They want swing. Oke, we'll give 'em
swing. You, Tony, you're workin' for
me now, not runnin' a hay-circuit band.
Let's see you take off on this chorus."

And Tony, hot-eyed and thinner now,
dropped his cigarette and obeyed. He
played hot, improvising, while the grin
crept up into Hampton's eyes.

"That's the way, guy, stick around
and you'll be a musician yet."

Tony kept his eyes on the music.
There was an answer for that too, an
answer he'd known for a long time. At
a lunch counter, that night, with the
drummer, he put some of it into words.

"You can't call that stuff swing. Not
the way he plays it. Look. There's
Goodman, and Harris, and plenty of
others that do play swing, but they
don't use stock orchestrations and they
don't beat your ears in with brass."

The drummer spooned sugar into his
coffee. "Yeah, maybe you're right."

"You know I'm right. Listen to any
name band. They'll mix it up. Swing,
sure, but the kind people can dance
to without running. More melody, more
strings."

"That's a funny way for a trumpet
man to talk." The drummer dropped a
dime on the counter and left.

Hampton called a rehearsal for the
next afternoon. There was an odd
bright light in his eyes, and his lips were
thin. He stopped in front of Tony. "I
wanted to tell you guys something. I
just found out we're not so good. Too
much brass for one thing." His eyes
never left Tony's face. "We beat their
ears in. How do you like that?"

No one moved or spoke.

"You, Montana, what do you think?"



"Is he gentle? I want to make a pet of him"

B. SHERMUND

Maybe we ought to feature the saxes or maybe the strings?"

"I wouldn't know," Tony said quietly. "But I think maybe you'd better get a new first trumpet; you're going to need one."

"I already got one." Hampton jerked a thumb at the door. "Out, guy. When I want help from hay-shakers I'll ask for it."

Train fare took part of Tony's money, and Mamma Sack took most of the rest before she puffed up the stairs ahead of him.

"I ain't had a trumpet in the house for a month." She stopped on the third-floor landing for breath, and then led the way down a dark hall. "Here's your room. Two clean towels a week, and the bath's two doors down. Remember, no jam sessions after ten o'clock."

He wrote Sharron that afternoon: "... I'll pick up the gang I need soon, and then ..."

THERE was one chair in the room, one small window. Tony sat there a long time, that night, with the muted trumpet in his lap. Then he played. Blue music, soft and haunting, that said the things he could never write.

Sharron's song. Slow, dusky music that stirred a longing. Blues. Bits of remembered songs, and a fragment of his own, low and sweet, that seemed to crowd the tiny room. Again and again, that night and the nights that followed, he came back to that theme. He saw her best then.

Two weeks, and he was playing with a five-piece night-club band. He liked that job, for the manager didn't care what or how they played as long as there was music. Music to keep a few people dancing, to cover the laughter, the click of dice and chips, and the patter of the dealers that filtered through from the back room.

A coffee-money job, but he liked it. And there was time, every day, to fool with Sharron's song. Yes, Sharron's, for it had never been anything else.

The police ended that when, on a busy Saturday night, they used axes on the crap tables, and loaded most of the staff into patrol wagons.

The raid was a week-old memory when her letter came. "... This is hard to say. I was afraid, Tony, and now I know I'm right. You can't treat love this way. Dreams aren't enough. I've got to think of my career. I think that Benny Marks and I ..."

TONY used a lot of paper, but the words were flat and trite. He tried, again and again, and in the end he didn't write at all.

That night he finished the song. Her song. A smoky melody, blue and husky, torn from the somber rhythm of life itself; melody, as old as longing, as new as pain, caught in the brazen throat of a muted trumpet ...

His money lasted just a week. His bags went first, then his suits, and all but two of his shirts. Mamma Sack was waiting, each time, when he came back from the pawnshop, and most of the money melted into her fat hands.

Then Carlisle sent for him. Mamma Sack was waiting with the news when Tony came in. "He called up twice. I told him you'd be down there in the morning."

The stiffness touched Tony's face. "Thanks."

"Maybe he's got a job for you—"

"Maybe," Tony went past her to the stairs. He heard the violins as he reached the second floor and stopped to listen. They were playing Sharron's song, his song, playing it sweet and smooth and slow. He whistled softly and ran then, pausing in his room only long enough to snatch his trumpet.

The smoky thrum of a guitar and the velvet-smooth voice of a clarinet blended with the violins as Tony reached the fourth floor. He brought the trumpet to his lips, picked up the melody as the violins drifted into the chorus.

A half moment later the first violin stopped, and a door slapped violently open. "Hey!" The cheerful voice rang down the hall. "Come on in. We been waitin' for you."

Tony said, "Coming." There were four men in the room, on the bed, on the single chair, and on the floor. They nodded, and a tall man shook sandy hair out of his eyes and used his violin bow as a pointer.

"That's Murphy on the bed with the stick. Joe Bordan plays the other fiddle, and Mark O'Hara's the guy with the guitar. I'm Louis Vinci, and we're all that's left of Jock Hutchison's band." He smiled easily, quickly, and it seemed to light his whole face. "We been kicking that piece of yours around. What do you call it?"

"You Can't Treat Love This Way." There was a warm friendliness about these men that Tony liked.

Murphy said, "Swell. That's got stuff."

Vinci tucked his violin under his chin. "It's your number, fella: how do you want to try it?"

"I'll take the first four bars," Tony answered quickly. "Then you come in, and the others can pick it up after that. Okay?"

"Plenty okay, boy; swing out."

THE girl in the reception room sent Tony into Carlisle's office without waiting, and Carlisle said, "Hello, son," in his quiet voice and came around the desk to shake hands.

"Mamma Sack said you wanted to see me?"

"Yes. Phil Howley—I handle his booking—wired me to ship him a first-trumpet man, somebody who can really give out. I thought of you."

Tony said, "Sorry. I had a month with Hampton, and that's plenty of New Orleans stuff for me. I don't like this blasting."

"What are you doing now?" "Nothing," Tony answered stubbornly. "Not a damn' thing, but I'm doing it my way at least."

Carlisle's eyes brushed over him, and Tony knew that the things he'd tried to hide weren't hidden at all: the broken shoes, the frayed cuffs, the shirt he'd washed himself. ...

"Things been breaking tough?" Carlisle asked gently.

"Well?" "I've got a little job for you." "If this is a gag I'll—"

"It isn't," Carlisle studied his shoe tips. "An old friend of mine, a Dutchman, owns a beer garden out on the Base Line Road. He came in yesterday to try and hire a band. I thought you could pick up a few boys and fill in till I can find him something else."

"I might be able to." There was still a question in Tony's dark eyes.

"Fine. This is an advance to—"

"Never mind," Tony interrupted. "I'll collect from the Dutchman. What's his address, and when does he want us?"

An hour later Tony was talking earnestly to the four men who roomed above him. Vinci nodded soberly when he had finished.

"I told these guys our luck was in. O'Hara, you run down an' see if you can scare up Joe; we're goin' to need him on the piano." He grinned at Tony. "This guy spans a lot of keys."

They had one brief rehearsal that afternoon, and then crowded into Vinci's small sedan to arrive at the beer garden just at seven.

Somehow, they got through that night, and after the crowd had gone they

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worked for hours. Slowly, the rough edges came off, and the instruments blended into a smoothly functioning unit.

They had stopped for coffee when Vinci asked, "How about that piece of yours?"

"I don't want to plug it," Tony answered seriously. "I'll make an arrangement, and we can use it as a theme."

Vinci drained his cup. "Swell. We haywired this band together, but we got to have somebody out in front waving the stick. You got us the job, you had the music, and you had a band once. How about it?"

"I'd like it swell," Tony's eyes went from one face to another and then he got to his feet. "My first band was corny, and flopped. I've been doing a lot of thinking since then, and I've got a lot of ideas I'll want to try."

"You're doing the talking, Tony."

"Say we have two guitars, and put them close to the mikes where they background the music. Then the violins, the piano, base, and the boom-chick rhythm on the drums. Swing stuff, but a relaxed swing without any brass but my trumpet. That gives you an idea."

Vinci looked at the others, and then at Tony. "It won't cost a dime to try."

A MONTH then, while the scant crowds gradually thickened, and their style became a liquid, flowing thing. Three drummers worked with them before Tony found a man who could supply the subtle rhythm to blend with the strings and the throb of the guitar. Smoldering, sullen rhythm, felt rather than heard, that added depth and color and pulled more couples to the dance floor.

The Dutchman's pale eyes beamed. He put up a new sign, and added more tables. Tony waited another month, and then went into the Dutchman's office at closing time.

The old man smiled at him. "You want more money, no?"

"That's it. I want to put more men in the band."

"That's okay, the business will stand it, but how long will you stay here? You might go away tomorrow, and then where will I be?"

Tony leaned against the desk, looked down into the old man's worried eyes.

"I'll sign a contract for three months if you want it that way."

"No-o, your word is good enough for me. I tell you. Tomorrow we close up, and I will put ads in all the papers. I raise the prices, and have the place fixed up. New tables, new bar, new dance floor. Maybe we make some money, no?"

Tony grinned, and they shook hands.

Then, for the first time in two months, Tony had a chance to listen to Benny Marks' broadcast. There was a new vocalist on the program, a girl with a personality voice—light and sweet—who took most of the bright numbers Benny seemed to be featuring. Sharron had only two songs.

Tony wondered about that, while her husky song went on and on in his mind. Wondered about it through the night; and even through the rehearsals it was there, close to the surface, a question without an answer.

He added another guitar and a second piano to the band. He and Vinci perspired over new orchestrations. The opening night came with a rush.

The band went over.

A columnist mentioned the band on three successive days. Others, on the amusement beat, dropped in to listen, and they too wrote about "swellegant swing." One of the smaller radio stations put them on a sustaining program, and Sharron's song went on the air for the first time.

There was no announcement. Just the tinkling pianos, the soft, sad cry of

muted violins, the chick-chick of the drums, and then the trumpet: rich and blue and haunting, filled with a longing older than man.

Vinci stayed behind, that night, after the rest of the band had gone. "Carlisle was here again, Tony. That's the third time this week, and each time he brings a different guy."

"Yes, I talked to him. He's booking us when we're through here."

"Where are we goin'?"

"He's not sure yet. Why worry, Vinci? We're pulling the white-tie trade in this place; we can't miss in a real spot. We've got the band."

Vinci nibbled his lower lip. "Yeah, that's what I'm gettin' at, Tony. We got the band, and we got the trio. Then there's two of the boys taking the vocals on the other stuff. That's okay—but we need a gal!"

"So that's it. Look, fella, we'll get a girl when we have to. All right?"

Vinci stood up. "You're running the band."

Carlisle called Tony at noon the next day. "I can put you in the Gold Room at the Hopkins. What do you say?"

"We'll take it."

"You open there on the twenty-fifth, three days after you finish at the Dutchman's—but you have to have a girl in the band. Okay?"

"Right." Tony put the phone together and stood there a long time before he said, "The Gold Room!" in a strangled whisper. "Hey, Vinci, we get the Gold Room! The Gold Room!"

The days telescoped into one another, bright and breathless. Too short, hurried days. Rehearsals, auditions, hours spent working over new arrangements. Record crowds at the Dutchman's the final week, and the flurry of moving to the Gold Room—the Big Time.

Impressive, the Gold Room, even in the sharp light of day. Dull gold walls, mirrored ceiling, empty tables. Tony's lips were dry when he stood in the door for the first time. Empty? No, for the great and the near great had played here, and the shadowy reaches of the room seemed to be watching, listening. "Come on," Tony said jerkily, "we've got work to do."

Vinci touched his arm. "Tony, how about the gal? You turned down plenty of them, and we open—"

"I called Carlisle this morning."

SHARRON came that afternoon. Tony turned at the sound of her voice, and knew in that first instant that time hadn't helped. The fierce longing was still there.

"Mr. Carlisle sent me," she said simply. "He said you needed a vocalist."

That phrase snapped the spell, and bleak anger swelled up inside him. The dry, dull ache came back to his throat, and he seemed to see again the chill words from her last letter, "... I've got to think of my career."

"Yes, I do," Tony said flatly, and turned to face the band. "Meet Sharron O'Day, the career girl. She works the top, and with her here we're a cinch to click."

She might not have heard, for only her eyes changed. She waited, quietly, one hand going to the bright scarf caught around her throat.

Throughout that day and the next he worked her without mercy. He spoke directly to her only when it was necessary, and then in a clipped, impersonal voice. The wall between them reared higher and higher.

The band felt it too, and things went badly. Tony fought for hours to get the smoothness he wanted—the bright, easy lilt, and failed. Finally he spread his hands in disgust.

"That's all for now," he said sharply. "Eat and get back in an hour. We'll get

this if it takes all night. You, O'Hara, stop dragging that..." He dropped his hands. "Let it go, I'll see you in an hour."

The others had gone when Vinci came to Tony's side. "What's wrong? Something's bothering you, and it's giving us all the jumps."

"There's nothing wrong," Tony lied.

He found Sharron in the Coffee Shop. She looked up, brown eyes heavy upon his black ones.

"Your contract." He placed the folded paper beside her plate. "This calls for the same money Benny Marks paid you so you won't lose anything by working for me."

She looked away suddenly, and then gathered up purse and gloves. "No, thanks, Tony, I can't take it."

"What do you mean?"

"Just that, I can't take it."

"Why not, isn't this your career?"

SHE winced as though he had struck her. "I—I rate that. Carlisle tried to warn me, but I laughed at him. I was so sure." Her eyes were very bright, and her lips quivered. "Well, you've had your laugh."

"Aren't you being a little dramatic?"

"You sent me away, remember? Your letters all said the same thing—you were busy, you might have a new band, you..." She swallowed. "It took me a long time to get it, but I did finally. You were dusting me off, and I was only hurting myself hanging onto something I couldn't have, so I tried to break it cleanly. I have some pride too. Then I tried to get that letter out of the box. I couldn't, but I thought you'd write. I thought you'd come and see that Benny Marks was fat and bald and ugly..."

"Sharron!" He walked toward her, through a wall that vanished suddenly in the misty brightness of her smile.

"Tony, I..."

He caught her hand. "Come on, hon, come on. We've got plenty to do."

"Yes, Tony." She was smiling, and fumbling for a handkerchief as she ran to match his swinging stride.

Opening night. Flowers and lights and laughter and music. The stiff black and white of dinner jackets and tails, and the flowing color of smart gowns. Good food, matchless service, and hours of dancing.

Then the broadcast. A red light glowing on the control board, and the announcer saying simply: "The band."

Music swelling up from the tinkle of the pianos. The smoky thrum of the guitars, the boom-chick-chick of the drums, the lovely mellow voice of the clarinets. Their theme, dusky, low, and haunting. That, for thirty seconds and then the announcer said: "The voice."

Spotlights, two of them, slashing down. Sharron, a slender figure in ivory, head tipped back, singing. Her eyes were closed, and a hush held the room while the words seemed to catch in her throat, seemed to be clouded with hurt longing.

"The trumpet!"

Full, golden, and rich, the magic of the muted trumpet touched the words, as Tony joined Sharron at the microphone, and tinted them with depth and glowing color.

A moment. The song was through, the announcer saying, "Presenting something new in music. America, meet Mr. and Mrs. Swingcopation."

The spotlights winked out, and there was just a second before the amber glow of the room lights penetrated the gloom. Tony touched Sharron's arm.

"Like we'd planned," he said huskily.

"Yes, Tony." She was close. He cupped his hand under her chin and she said, "Tony! They'll see..."

"Let 'em!" He kissed her then, and her lips were warm and sweet, like music that went on forever.

East of Broadway

Continued from page 19

"I'm afraid she does."
"You know—kidding about myself... well, I'm scared that she's got a sort of hunch that the mayor will meet me and that I'll be escorted up Fifth Avenue by the Seventh Regiment, and that they'll have to put a police guard around Mother Hubbard's boardinghouse to keep out the producers who want me to autograph a lot of dotted lines."
Tiny chuckled. "She isn't as dumb as you think, Eddie. And she's like a kid with her first toy. I'm betting that whatever she sees and whatever she does will look like dreams come true. You see, me lad, there are things concerned herewith that even you don't understand." Tiny looked up, saw Linda, smiled and said, "Gorgeous! You look like a million, Linda."
"And feel frightened to death."

THEY sped across the Jersey meadows, whirled toward Jersey City, and then plunged into a tunnel. "You are now beneath the famous Hudson River," announced Eddie. "When next the train stops you will be at the Pennsylvania Station in the city of New York, population considerable. Hats on, please."

Linda's eyes were wide open and dancing. The two men watched her and smiled appreciatively at each other. Tiny grunted, "Untouched by human hands," and Linda asked, "What did you say?" and he answered, "Nothing." And then there was a slowing down of the train, and a bit of daylight from overhead and another long platform and a surge of passengers toward the vestibule where the porter was shoving baggage toward the waiting hands of redcaps.

"This way out, folks," said Eddie. He took Linda's arm and squeezed it. He felt her press tightly against him. He was strangely excited and happy. Silly, he called it—like a kid. Oh! it was swell to be back in New York. Just to be here, no matter what happened.

And then they were on the platform amid piles of luggage and a welter of noise, and from nowhere at all a vividly blond creature swept down upon them and enveloped Eddie in a long embrace. A pleasantly strident female voice said, "The prodigal calf has returned. Eddie Lawson, you look grand."

"And me?" inquired Tiny meekly.
"You?" The tall girl swung around. "I didn't even see you, Mister Martin. You're practically emaciated."

A short, square-shouldered, gray-eyed man about thirty years of age joined them. Eddie grabbed Linda and pushed her toward the tall girl. "Linda," he said, "this is Honey. Honey Reardon—"

"The Broadway nightingale," chuckled Honey, holding out a warm, strong hand. "The life of the party. The queen of the night clubs. Honey Reardon, herself, in person. Not a moom pitcher. Linda—whoever you are—you're cute."
Linda laughed. She said, "You-all sho' give a girl a mighty sweet welcome."

"Well, hush my mouth!" gasped Honey. "A real Southern accent, unspoiled by chemicals and free from preservatives. It's a miracle."

"This is Danny Reardon," said Eddie, introducing the quiet, square-shouldered man. "He's Honey's brother."

"God help me," said Danny, shaking Linda's hand.

"He's also a cop," mourned Tiny. "It's an essential combination."

They followed their redcaps along the platform. Honey Reardon linked her arm in Linda's. "Tiny wrote me you were pint size," she said, "but I wasn't prepared for this. What kind of lies have the lads been telling you?"

Linda looked up at the other girl. "They've been sayin' things about you."

"They ain't gents. Don't you believe a word."

Linda's pace became almost a run as she struggled to keep up with the taller girl. And Honey was tall. Tall and strikingly handsome, although her best friend could not have called her pretty. She was a vivid creature whose natural blondness had been somewhat flagrantly accentuated by the ministrations of beauty operators. Yet there was something real and genuine and warm about her: something Linda instinctively liked. She had a feeling that if Honey didn't like someone, it wouldn't take that person very long to find out.

They piled into a taxi and spilled out into Eighth Avenue. "Mother Hubbard's?" inquired Danny.

"Same old place," responded Eddie.

Linda asked, "Is this Broadway?"

"We wouldn't admit it if it was. Sugarplum—this heah ain't nothin' on'y Eighth Avenue. How'm I doin', Eddie?"

"The belle of Dixie. Where you working now, Honey?"

"Club Calor."

"Oh!" gasped Linda, "you're an actress."

"My gosh! Chile, you got things to learn. Give ear, because this is Honey Reardon speaking. I'm an entertainer. A hostess. A night-club singer—and what night clubs." She chuckled. "I don't sing sweet, Linda—but I sing loud."

"And hot," explained Tiny.

"FOR any price per week I carry the torch for a bunch of souses. I'm the black sheep of the Reardon outfit, and the bane of my brother's existence. But beneath my harsh exterior there beats

stories in height and oppressively grim. But to Linda Waring, standing there on the sidewalk, acutely conscious of the roar and whir of New York, it was the fulfillment of a dream. She hadn't imagined this—but she knew that she wouldn't have had it any other way. She followed them up the stone steps and saw Eddie step into the hallway and heard him yell, "Hi, there! We're here!"

A dumpy little woman, clad in house-dress and gray apron, appeared from the shadows of the hall and swept down on Eddie. She embraced him rapturously, and told him that he was a sight for sore eyes. Then she whirled and enfolded Linda. "So this is what you've been writing about." She held Linda off at arm's length. "Pretty," she said in her direct way. "Pretty as hell. I hope she's got it."

"She has," stated Eddie Lawson. "I'll guarantee it."

"You! What do you know about show business? Any of you." Mother Hubbard beamed down at Linda. "It's a grand profession, my dear. Romantic and exciting. I used to be in vaudeville: Hubbard & Wells, singing, dancing and polite comedy... also a bit of juggling and magic if the audience looked tough. I was very successful. I laid 'em end to end in Dubuque and Anniston. And my career has been crowned with this..." She gestured to the cavernous hallway and touched the soiled gray apron. "Let's hope you've got the real stuff, Linda. But the minute you find out you haven't—hop the first train south." Mother Hubbard threw back her head and laughed. "Imagine me preaching! But there's something about this little girl—"

"Are you telling me!" Eddie put his arm around the ample waist of Mother Hubbard. "Got our rooms ready?"

"Right. Had to get rid of two acrobats and a pair of roller skaters. So if you can't pay board, I'm still getting an even break."

"In advance," boasted Eddie. "I'm heeled."

"He's calling himself names," murmured Honey Reardon.

LINDA'S room was unbelievably small but immaculately clean. It contained a white enameled bedstead, a washbasin and pitcher, a rickety golden-oak dresser, a mirror, a rocking chair and a straight chair. The view was of an alley. "But," explained Mother Hubbard, "at night you can look toward the east and see the electric signs on Broadway, and that's more than Eddie can do from the room I'm giving him."

Honey said, "I'll stay here with Linda while she gets unpacked."

Eddie tramped downstairs with Tiny and Mother Hubbard and Danny Reardon. Danny bade them goodbye and said he'd see them later. "Making the rounds tonight, Eddie?"

"And how. Gotta get a job for myself."

Mother Hubbard escorted the two men to a rear room on the second floor. "Modest but clean," she said. "I could have let it out to an animal act, but I draw the line somewhere. Has she really got it, Eddie?"

"Linda? I think so."

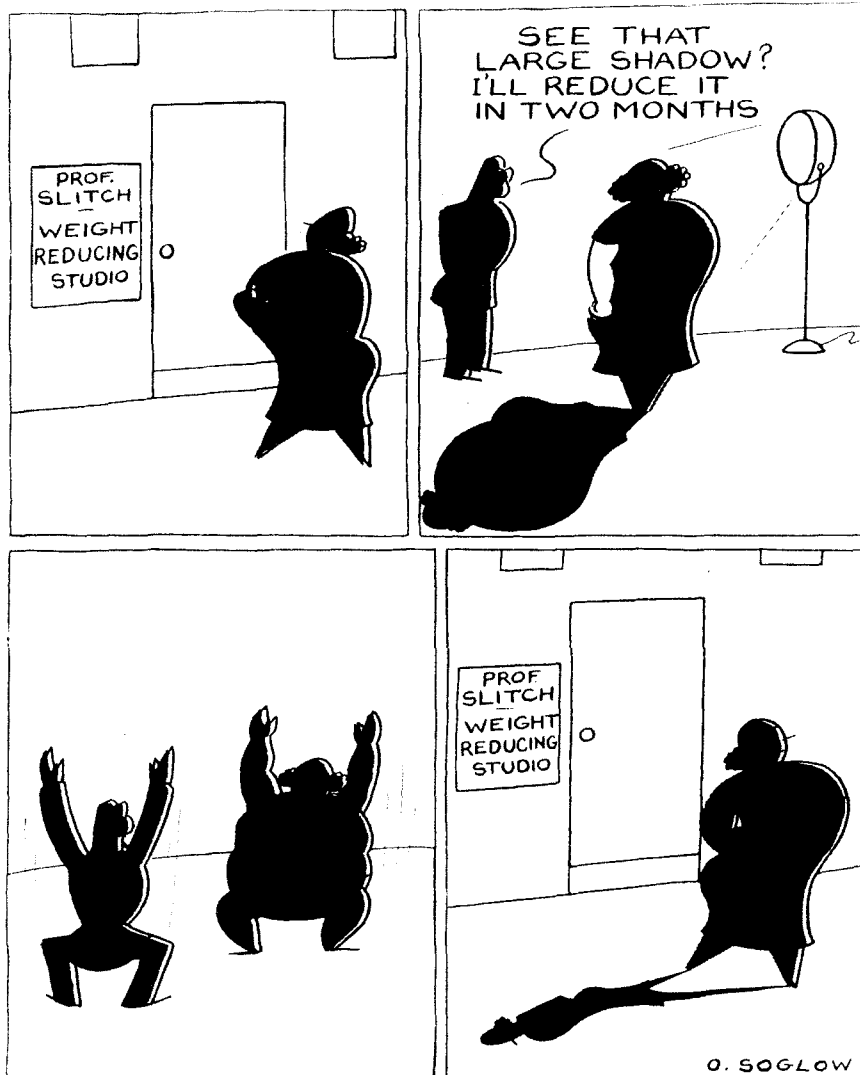
"Here's hoping!"

"I believe she'll stand Broadway on its ear."

"That's show business. Well... you've got my best wishes." Mother Hubbard paused with one hand on the door. "Taking your beef and beans here tonight?"

"Sure. Got a little table for three?"

"Wouldn't you know I had?" The door closed and Mother Hubbard's footsteps



"My credit's still good there. I hope."

Honey had been studying Linda. She said, sternly, "Eddie—you shouldn't have done it."

"What?"

"Brought this little gal with you. She belongs way down South in the land of cotton. Ol' times there, they used to be rotten, and so on."

"She belongs in New York. Mark my words. And you'll have to teach her things."

"Within reason," interjected Danny.

"PROUD brother I've got. He's crazy about me in his own peculiar way—and it's really very peculiar. Now look— isn't it about time for me to ask Linda how she likes New York?"

"Yeh," grunted Tiny, "but not for publication."

a heart of gold—guaranteed not to tarnish, or words to that effect. And how's your old man?"

Linda said impulsively. "I like you."

"I'm safe. Which is more than I can say for these gorillas. And here we are." She gestured toward the street. "Observe the portals of the manse which you are about to call home. Mother Hubbard's theatrical boardinghouse. Famous as a gathering place for troupers out of work."

"Do you live here, too?"

"I would, but Danny says no soap. He makes me do the housework for him. It's swell training—though for what, I've never been able to figure."

Mother Hubbard's boardinghouse was not a thing of architectural beauty. It was just a flight of steps and a doorway in a block of red brick buildings, four

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sounded from the stairway. "She's a darling," observed Eddie. "And will she be surprised when I pay three weeks' board in advance."

"Uh-huh. It might be fatal."

"SAY it," prompted Eddie. "Say it quick."

"Say what?" asked Linda.

"So this is Broadway!"

"Must I—really?"

"Of course. Everybody does."

"I won't. Because I wouldn't believe you, even if you said it was."

They moved slowly in the dense crowd. Linda's left hand was linked in the crook of Eddie's right arm, and her right hand also clung to him. She looked smaller than usual against this winking, glittering background. She asked few questions, but let Eddie talk on:

"On our right, ladeez and jumpmen, is a flea circus—so-called because it and its patrons have fleas. Next we find some small stores—dissatisfaction or your money refunded. Yonder are three of our best theaters, specializing in nothing but super-colossal, extra-special, ultra de luxe feature films—admission high and try to get in. We have here a waffle shop, and there a game emporium where one may drop nickels into slots and shoot marbles, or buy live turtles for shipment to any part of the United States, including Karnak—"

"Let's," interrupted Linda.

"Let's what?"

"Send a turtle to Tiny."

"Done with you." They purchased a turtle for twenty-one cents, had it inscribed with Tiny's name and ordered it mailed to him at Mother Hubbard's boardinghouse. They stood under the El and Linda marveled. They went for a brief subway ride. They walked through Radio City, and rode up to the Observation Roof where Linda was enraptured by the vast jeweled panorama. "I—I can't believe it," she said, "and I want to cry."

"Save it," advised Mr. Lawson, "until you see some of the acts in the night clubs I'm taking you to."

THERE are many types of night spots in New York. There are the quiet places which jealously guard the reputation of being swank, which means that they ritily exclude all patrons whose wallets are not stuffed and who are not in evening dress. There is a second group where the music is hotter, the prices higher, the cover charge obtrusive, the décor startling and restraint is conspicuous by its absence. There are places where unknowns go to stare at other unknowns in the hope that they are celebrities—and with the further hope that they, too, will be mistaken for persons who count. In the third group come the mad, lavish, insane spots with nude and excellent floor shows. And in the fourth group—east of Broadway—are the tiny clubs which date from the speak-easy era. Here the drinks are poor, the food atrocious, the music torrid rather than good and the floor attractions distinctive for their mediocrity.

Such a spot was the Nifty Fifty Club: a long, narrow room just below the street level—the basement floor of a one-time austere residence. It was done in a peculiar shade of red and its walls were lined with cartoons by unknown artists whose work gave promise that they would remain forever in obscurity. The lighting was mercifully dim, there was a dance floor the size of a pocket handkerchief, and on a platform at the far end four musicians blew and scraped and bellowed a rhythmic dirge which somehow gave one the urge to dance.

The tables were backed against the walls on both sides of the room, and near the entrance there was a bar at which sat a few gentlemen of leisure and three girls of even more leisure. But dingy

as the place was, Eddie's shoulders went back as he helped Linda down the three steps and inside, and he experienced a homey thrill as the bartender ceased his cocktail making and yelled, "Eddie Lawson! You old so-and-so. When did you hit town?"

"Today. How's tricks, Lew?"

"About the same."

"Business?"

"Lousy. Say, it's swell seein' you again. What'll you have on the house?"

"I'll let you know." Eddie drew the wide-eyed Linda forward. "Lew, this is Miss Waring."

"HAPPY," stated Lew approvingly. "Better look out for this Lawson guy." He turned back to Eddie and said, "Oh, by the way, Eddie—Andrew North was askin' for you the other night."

"Who?"

"Andrew North."

"No!"

"On the level."

"What'd he want?"

"You tell me. He just said, 'By the way, has Eddie Lawson been in here recently?' and when I said 'No,' he said, 'Well, if he does drift in, tell him I'd like to see him.'"

Eddie moved off toward a table after saying, "Thanks, Lew. I wonder what he wants with me," and Linda asked, "Who is Andrew North?"

"Sit down, Linda. Comfy? Andrew North? Nobody knows much about him, and everybody knows everything."

"It's a game, isn't it? I'm supposed to ask twenty questions."

"Well, he's a gambler, and they say he was a gangster and a racketeer, but that's anybody's guess. He owns slices of a half a dozen night spots and Lord knows what else. He's wallowing in dough—that's what they say, anyway—and some folks like him and others hate him. But whether they like him or not, they're all scared of him."

"Sounds like a moving picture. What could he want with you?"

"Probably likes to shake hands with celebrities." Eddie's eyes were dancing mischievously. "That's not it, Sugar. I'm small fry or even smaller than that, and I can't dope it out. Most likely North can't either. Maybe he heard me sing once and wants to pay me to lay off from now on." Eddie waved to a girl at the bar who had called to him through the haze of smoke. "How do you like it, Linda?"

"I love it."

"Not very high-hat. Just a jernt . . . but you might as well know it: This is the kind of spot I work in."

"I could say lots of things, Eddie—but they'd all sound so silly. I—I reckon I just better say nothin'. But I sho' am havin' heaps of fun."

A SPOTLIGHT blazed from the back wall. A dapper little man introduced himself as master of ceremonies and announced that the famous Gracie Hawkins would now regale them with her newest songs. Gracie turned out to be a very muscular lady with ample hips and bosom who obviously fancied herself as a dramatic actress. Her ballads were atrocious and the last one was more than faintly suggestive, so that Eddie felt embarrassed for Linda. He saw that her cheeks were pink and he whispered, "Don't let it get you, kid. After all, we're married."

He was joking, of course—and he wondered why she looked up, startled, and moved just a fraction of an inch away from him. He said to himself, "Smart guy, Eddie Lawson. Always saying the wrong thing at the right time."

Miss Gracie Hawkins having completed her chore, the master of ceremonies took occasion to announce that a predecessor of his was in the house—"None other than the famous and tal-

ented Eddie Lawson—take a bow, Eddie. And maybe the little lady will take a bow, too" . . . and Eddie shoved a bewildered Linda to her feet and there was scattered, impersonal applause, and somebody said audibly, "Eddie picks 'em apple-seed size."

They remained at the Nifty Fifty Club only a short time, and then moved on to other places. They were all of a pattern—all somewhat dingy, all tawdry—yet, queerly enough, they had a certain integrity. They were what they were, without pretense—and above everything, they were New York. The acts were bad, the music swiny, the refreshments poor and the atmosphere informal. And in each of the spots the same thing happened in more or less the same way. At the Dirty Club: "Hi, Eddie, me lad—what you been up to?"

"Whaddaya mean, Tim? What have I been up to?"

"Andrew North's been asking for you."

"What did he say?"

"Nothin'. He never does unbutton his lip. But he left word he was lookin' for you."

At the Race Course: "When did you and Andrew North git to be buddies?"

"Meaning what?"

"The guy was asking where you was. Said he wanted to see you."



At the Maison Hotcha: "Goin' racketeer on us, ain't you, Eddie? How come?"

"Sure. But how did you find out?"

"Andrew North was askin' for you." On the street once more, Eddie inquired: "Why should North want to see me?"

"Why shouldn't he?" asked Linda. "I do."

"He's a big shot. To him, I'm just another punk."

"Don't boast, Eddie—it isn't hahdly becomin'."

"I'm serious. I never even met the guy, and his rep is very much on the putrid side."

"You sho' make him sound attractive."

"I can't figure it out, that's all. And what I can't understand bothers me." He pressed her arm: "Tired?"

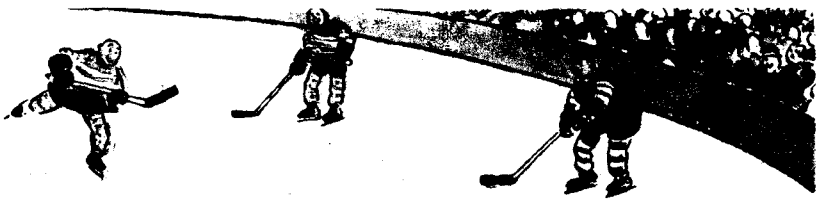
"No, suh. I feel like I'm walkin' on air."

"How'd you like to pop in on Honey Reardon?"

"And see her performance?"

"You don't have to look. But you can't help listening. It's right around the corner."

The Club Calor proved its right to its name. Even in the moderate heat of late May it was warm. Its interior decoration was supposed to be Cuban, which is to say that many yellow bananas, brown coconuts and bilious palm trees had been painted on the walls, and the orchestra had a drummer who doubled with the gourds although the tempo of the music remained steadfastly fox-trot



rather than rumba. From behind a smoke screen came a human dynamo. Honey Reardon, shadowed by the colossal Tiny Martin, swept down on them: "Just in time," she announced. "The little gal from the tall timbers will now learn all about singing as she shouldn't be done. Linda, darling—stuff cotton in your ears because I'm gettin' ready to go to town."

Linda looked up at her delightedly. "I'm glad we got here in time."

"Talk sweet—and talk quick. When I finish you'll be out cold."

HONEY REARDON was announced. Most of the patrons paid no attention, but Tiny and Eddie and Linda—assisted by a thoroughly inebriated gentleman at the bar—clapped loudly. Honey laughed and announced loudly, "They're all friends of mine, so don't pay any attention to their applause."

Honey had done herself a slight injustice, but not a gross one. She wasn't the best singer in the world, but she was very close to being the loudest. Yet, withal, she did have a definite personality, and as she expressed it after her act ended: "You see, Linda, I don't sell my songs. I shove 'em down their throats."

"There's others worse," complimented Tiny.

"Isn't he the sweet lad? Large but dopey. Eddie been showing you the jerns?"

"We've been everywhere."

"Wait'll he takes you to a respectable place. Will you be surprised?"

"I've been showing myself up in my true colors," grinned Eddie. "She knows just what I am today—I hope she's satisfied."

"At that," said Honey with a touch of seriousness, "these spots can teach you something, Linda. Lots of our best floor acts started this way... and most of 'em finish here."

Linda said, "Don't try to frighten me." "Eddie! She's bright." Honey patted the other girl's hand. "I ain't trying to

scare you, darlin'. I'll leave that to these two-fisted he-men. They're experts. And now I've got an idea."

"Copyright it," suggested Tiny.

"I will, Wise Guy. How's for slipping up to my place for some scrambled eggs?"

"I'm on a diet," said Tiny. "I gotta have bacon, too."

"You, Linda?"

"I'd love it." Linda made an impulsive gesture which included them all. "You-all sho' are showin' me a grand time."

"Lots of people are going to try that," said Honey Reardon. "Don't stick your chin out."

Honey begged off, and conducted them to her little three-room apartment. They had stopped at a delicatessen to purchase eggs and bacon and rolls, but before they invaded the kitchenette Eddie said, "Mind giving Linda the double-O, Honey?"

Honey said, "I can stand it if she can. Yonder's something in the shape of a piano, Linda. Strut your stuff."

LINDA walked across the room and seated herself at the piano. She fingered the keys tentatively, and then commenced to play with her light, sure, persuasive touch. Honey said, "Hmph!" and leaned forward interestedly.

And then Linda sang: softly, gently, with eyes modestly downcast. It was a number Eddie had rehearsed her in... and he watched. And then there was a line—a thoroughly innocent line—and when Linda reached it she raised her eyes for just the tiniest fraction of a second, and glanced at them roguishly... then veiled her eyes again and Honey gasped, "Gal—howdy!"

The number continued. There were provocative pauses, little gestures with which Linda seemed to reach out and take them all close to her. She seemed to say, "Some day someone will have me. How do you know but what it might be you?" And then the song ended and

there was silence for perhaps half a minute. Then Honey turned to Eddie and there was no laughter in her eyes—only enthusiasm.

She said simply, "You've picked a winner, Eddie."

The moment of tension ended, and it was Linda who led the way into the kitchen. Then there was laughter and banter and gaiety, and the little room was filled with the odor of broiling bacon, and the aroma of frying eggs. Eddie and Tiny donned aprons and set the table, and made general nuisances of themselves, and Linda bubbled over with happiness and reflected that this indeed was the New York of which she had dreamed.

She didn't know or suspect the fear that had obsessed Eddie—that she might have expected luxury and grandeur; she only knew that she was happy and that she liked the folks she had met, and that she loved to look through the door and see Eddie with an apron on and that wide, boyish grin showing, and his banter dominating the party. It was New York. It was perfect. Linda heard Eddie boasting: "I'm domestic, Tiny—domestic, Tiny—domestic as hell. Watch me set the table." And she thought, "Yes, it's New York... and he's my husband. I'm married to him." And Honey Reardon asked, "What are you thinking of, Linda? You're blushing."

"It's the stove, Honey. Just the heat from the stove."

"Oh yeah?" murmured Honey, and Linda said, "Sho' 'nough. It is, really."

The front door opened and Danny Reardon walked in. "Eggs," he enthused, "and bacon."

"That's why he's a good dick," explained Honey. "He deduces everything."

Danny divested himself of coat and vest and stood forth in suspenders. "Six more oofs," ordered Honey, "and another side of bacon. What these flat-foots lack in brains they make up in appetite."

THEY sat around the table and ate their eggs and bacon and drank cold beer, and Eddie said to Reardon:

"Hey, Danny—what do you know about Andrew North?"

Danny said, "What don't I know!"

"Meaning what?"

"He's bad medicine—that's all."

"How?"

"Any way you want to mention. Smart guy with a clever mouthpiece. We've never been able to pin anything on him."

"Dumb dicks," stated Honey.

"He's a gambler, isn't he?"

"Sure. Marked cards, loaded dice, fixed races." Danny's calm gray eyes searched Eddie's face. "What's got you so het up about North all of a sudden? Do you know him?"

"No. But everywhere I've been to-night they've told me he was looking for me."

"Looking for you?" Danny was frankly surprised. "Why should a guy like Andrew North be looking for you?"

"That's what I want to know."

"Hmm!" Danny shook his head. "How did these lads say it? Friendlylike?"

"Sure. They thought we were old friends."

"If he's looking for you, Eddie—he'll find you. And I don't like it."

"Why?"

"Because Andrew North never does anybody anything but damage."

"But, Danny—it couldn't be anything like that. I'm not worth North's time."

"Evidently you are." Danny drummed on the table with heavy fingers. "Yeh—he'll find you all right, Eddie. But when he does—you be careful. Andrew North spells only one thing."

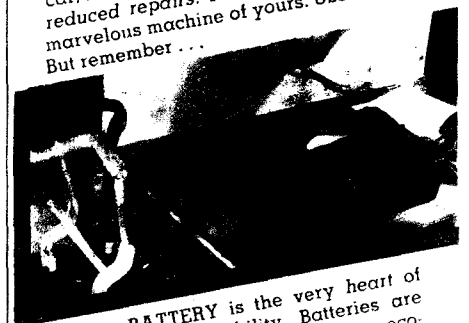
"What's that?"

And Danny answered: "Trouble."

(To be continued next week)



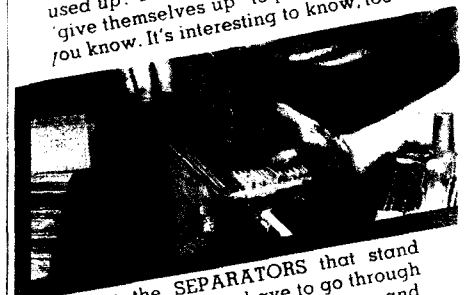
IT'S SO MUCH MORE ECONOMICAL to drive today! Improved motors give so much better mileage. Thank the builders of your car, too, for increased driving comfort and reduced repairs. Make the most of that marvelous machine of yours. Use it more! But remember...



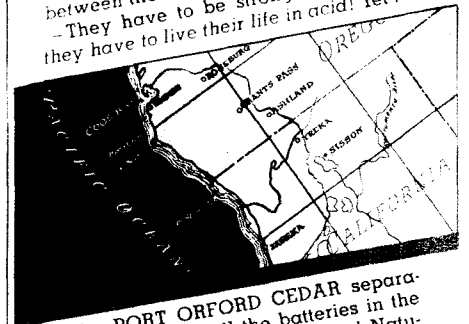
... your BATTERY is the very heart of your car's dependability. Batteries are higher in capacity, longer-lived, more economical than they used to be. Thank the progressive spirit of American battery manufacturers for that! But...



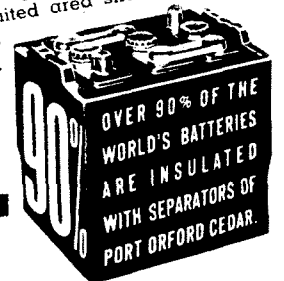
... your battery still needs regular testing and charging, and timely replacement, for, after all, a battery is built to be used up! The plates of a battery have to "give themselves up" to produce current, you know. It's interesting to know, too...



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PORT ORFORD CEDAR
THE WORLD'S FINEST BATTERY SEPARATOR WOOD



"Look, Martha! He said I could keep it!"

JAY IRVING

A Queen's Ransom

Continued from page 22

something on him. He'd better go easy: he might be in a jam.

"I'll help," he said, "but I won't take no guff."

"Well, what about those notes?" asked Crane.

"I don't know nothing."

"Somebody in the house has been passing them out. You can't even guess who it is?"

Brown shook his head. He said he didn't know anybody in the house very well besides Céleste. He'd worked for Essex less than a year and he hadn't paid much attention to the regular servants. Besides, he and Craig didn't get along. He thought Craig was making plenty on the household accounts, taking a commission from the stores and stealing supplies, liquor and linen.

"Those two spicks, Carlos and Pedro, are on the take, too," he said.

"Do you think they'd have the connections to kidnap Miss Essex?" Crane asked.

"How do you know what connections a spick has?"

"Did you ever hear any of them mention Tortoni?"

"I thought of that myself," said Brown. "But these are Spanish spicks. Tortoni is . . . was an Italian spick. The breeds don't mix."

"How long has Craig carried a rod?"

"Just since the notes began to come." Brown scratched his armpit. "Essex had us all get guns."

"Who's the guy who watched us arrive?"

"That was me."

"And the other guy—the one on the balcony?"

"Me, too."

"It looked like a different guy."

"No, that was me," Brown grinned. "Essex wanted to be sure you weren't pretendin' to be detectives."

"He isn't sure yet," said O'Rourke.

AND you've got no idea how the notes have been arriving?" Crane asked Brown.

"I could make a guess."

"Go ahead."

"It's somebody who was around each time Essex got a note."

"Who?"

"Well, it's a broad."

"Miss Day?"

"Yeah, if that's her real name."

"But Essex says nobody was with him at the Walpern," said O'Rourke.

"She had a room there."

"So," Crane nibbled at a fingernail. "Have you got anything on her?"

"No. Just that she's handy to deliver notes."

"Deliver? You don't think she's writing them?"

Brown slapped a mosquito. "She couldn't frame a kidnaping by herself." The dead mosquito left a blob of bright blood on his arm.

"I guess you're right." Crane settled back in his chair. "If she's in it, she's working for someone."

"What about the red ink?" O'Rourke asked.

"The hell!" Brown got to his feet. "That reminds me of something."

He was a well-built, stocky man. His legs were short for great speed, but they were strong. He had been a hooker, able to hit from any angle, and his shoulders were wadded with muscles. From his breastbone to the top button on his shorts ran a mat of black hair, as thick as a wolf's pelt. Layers of fat rounded his belly.

"This morning the major asked me to get him a bottle of red ink," he said.

A current of air fluttered the curtain on the west window.

Crane asked, "Did you get him some?"

"There was a bottle in Essex's study."

O'Rourke asked, "He tell you what he needed it for?"

Brown shook his head.

"Has he still got the bottle?"

"Naw. I put it back in Essex's desk just before dinner."

"Looks like we got a date with the major," O'Rourke said.

CRANE nodded. "Got any other ideas?" he asked Brown.

Brown had none.

"Well, thanks a lot," said Crane, rising. "This may come to something."

"I hope it does. I'm sorry for that broad," Brown said.

"I guess it isn't so swell to be kidnaped."

"No. Not for a broad," Brown said.

"Remembering Céleste, I guess not."

Mosquitoes had driven everyone in from the patio. The Bouchers, Miss Langley and the major were playing bridge. Miss Day, who had been listening to Benny Goodman swing "Sing, Baby, Sing" on the radio, hailed them with a cry of joy. "Come on and dance," she called. "I've got the hottest band."

Crane helped her kick away a rug from in front of the radio. He took hold of her, swung into a fox trot. Her back was cool and firm under his palm.

"Nice music," he said.

She snuggled closer. "You said it."

Her flesh was solid. She didn't have the slender, supple muscles of Imago Paraguay. She didn't have the dancer's perfect tempo, her intuitive anticipation of the steps, but she danced quite well. She was going to be heavy at thirty-five.

"What did you find out?" she asked.

"What do you mean?" Crane said.

"Well, he's right. I have." She was leading him now, her arm muscles tense. "But that's not why he wants to get me in trouble."

"No?"

"No. He's sore because I won't give him a tumble."

"That would make a guy sore."

"You don't have to be sarcastic."

"I'm not."

Imago Paraguay's eyes were on him. They had no expression in them at all. Her face reminded him again of a perfectly tinted ivory mask. Essex was still talking to her. She seemed bored.

Miss Day relaxed a trifle. "What else did that bum say?" She let him lead.

"He said you were at the Walpern when the first note came."

"What of it?"

"Essex told me you weren't."

"He didn't want to mix me in this business."

Benny Goodman's band had taken up the straight melody again. The music was fuller, smoother, less wild. He danced half-time.

"That was gentlemanly," he said.

"But I don't care," she said.

He accomplished a slow turn, using two two-steps.

"If I was putting those notes around I wouldn't put myself on the spot, would I?" she asked.

"I guess not."

THE music stopped and a fine mellow voice said there would be a brief interval for station announcements. O'Rourke came up to them. Another fine mellow voice made the station identification.

Miss Day said, "I'll tell you who you ought to watch."

"Who?" Crane asked.

"That dame over there." She jerked a thumb at Imago Paraguay. "There's something funny about her." Her thumbnail was painted a blood-red.

"How do you mean?"

"Well, for one thing: what's she doing here?"

"What is she doing here?" demanded Crane.

"I'm asking you." Miss Day adjusted a shoulder strap, much to O'Rourke's disappointment. "She's supposed to be Penn's guest, but he's scared of her."

"Everybody is," said Crane.

Carlos walked across the room to Essex. "Telephone, sir," he said. "Will you take it in here?"

Essex looked frightened. "I'll take it in the hall." He stood up, stared around the room uncertainly, then followed Carlos toward the hall.

"Maybe it's the ransom directions," whispered Miss Day.

O'Rourke switched off the radio. The people at the bridge table stopped their game, craned their necks toward the hall. The major started to get up, then changed his mind. Miss Day and O'Rourke followed Crane over to Imago Paraguay.

There was a decanter of whisky, a chromium siphon and a silver bowl of cracked ice beside the divan. On the same table were tall glasses. "Will you have a drink?" Crane asked Imago Paraguay.

"Tha-ank you." Her smile showed her very small, very even teeth. "I will."

"Make it four," said O'Rourke.

Crane put three fingers of whisky in four of the glasses. He sniffed at one of them. The liquor was Scotch.

Imago said to Miss Day, "It is exciting, is it not?"

Miss Day said, "I'll take the races any day."



O'Rourke followed Crane out the door. Brown scowled through the opening at him. "I'd like to get you in an alley, Mick," he said.

O'Rourke said, "I never go in alleys."

On their way downstairs they both had to dry their faces with handkerchiefs. The air was sultry; it felt as though it was going to storm.

"We're still alive," said O'Rourke.

"But now I got to interview the major," said Crane. "And he doesn't like me."

"He didn't like that telegram you sent him."

"There's more than that. I think he's trying to marry Camelia for her dough."

"Everybody is," said O'Rourke.

"Except Tony Lamphier."

O'Rourke transferred his revolver from his coat pocket to the holster. "How'd you happen to know Brown was going with Céleste?"

"If you were working here," Crane asked, "who would you be going with?"

"You're pretty smart."

"I don't have to be to figure that."

"From that fighter you talked to."

In a corner of the room, on a divan, Imago Paraguay and Essex were talking. Essex was saying something; Imago's face was coldly composed.

"How'd you know we were going to talk to Brown?"

"Tom O'Rourke asked me where his room was."

"We found out very little from him," Crane said.

BENNY was taking a lick on the clarinet. The music became hot. Only drum and clarinet were playing.

Crane cruised around the outside edge of the cleared space on the floor, whirling handsomely on the turns. "Brown thinks you're dishing out the notes," he informed her.

There was no break in her tempo. "He would," she said.

"After all, there's some reason. You've been with Essex all during the time he's been getting the notes."

"Did Brown say that?"

"Yes, that's the story he told me."

"There They Would Have Stayed...and Frozen!"

Dog Brings Aid to
Family Marooned
After Icy Plunge

Mrs. W. J. Murtha
Baldwin, Wis.



"THE CLOCK struck two as I got up to see if the baby was covered," writes Mrs. W. J. Murtha, R.F.D. 3, Baldwin, Wis.

"Outside a light was flashing...down toward the frozen, flooded river bottom where the highway dips close to the shore and the road lay as much as six feet under ice and water. Instantly I thought, 'It's finally happened. A car has broken through!'"

"I called my family. We threw on some wraps and hurried down there with our flashlight and our police dog, Rex.

"Sure enough, a car had broken through the thin

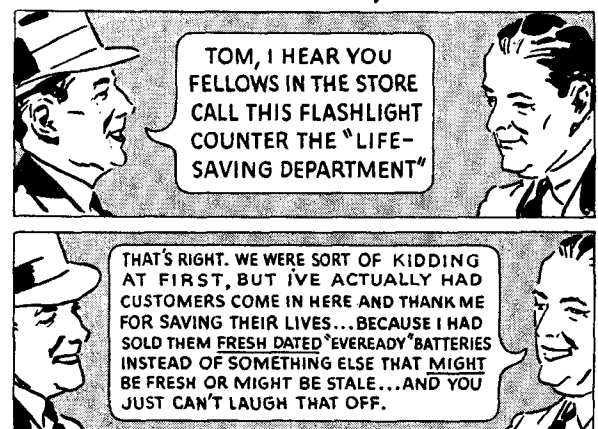


he did. The man who had been signalling tied the rope around the one child in the group. She was crying with cold and fright, but finally started over the ice while we took in the slack of the rope, and got to shore safely. Then three times more Rex took the rope back. Each of the three grown-ups broke through the ice time and again...but thanks to the rope and good luck we were able to get them to dry land.

"The father performed a remarkable rescue in getting the car door open after that plunge to the bottom, getting the three others out and pulling them onto the roof. But he says they owe their lives to us and to the power of *fresh* DATED 'Eveready' batteries, for there they would have stayed and frozen if the batteries in that soaking wet light had failed to work.

Signed

Mrs. W. J. Murtha



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ice where the road was flooded. Four people stood marooned on its top, clinging together in terror while one signalled frantically with his flashlight. We returned the signal with our own light, and soon as we were near enough, called to them to stay where they were. We feared they might try to walk back on the ice, and that would be suicide.

"We put the end of a long hay rope in the dog's mouth and told him to take it out there. He cowered and whined and didn't want to go, but finally

Crane put in the ice, added charged water. He handed a glass to Imago, another to Miss Day, gave O'Rourke his choice of the remaining two.

"Here's how," he said.

They were drinking when Essex came back into the room. "Just the police," he told the bridge players. "Wanted to know if I'd heard anything."

He walked over to the divan and Miss Day gave him her glass. "You need it, baby," she said.

"Where's Lamphier?" Crane asked.

"He went upstairs to lie down," Essex said. He was unnaturally pale; almost a greenish white. "He's done up." He took a long drink of the whisky.

"He should be," O'Rourke said. "No sleep since night before last."

"And very little then," said Crane, remembering the pursuit of the flamingo.

"I think I'll lie down on the couch in the library," Essex said. "Then I'll be handy if anyone wants me."

"You ought to take a nap," said Miss Day.

"I can't sleep."

"I have some sleeping powders," said Imago Paraguay. "They are excellent. I take two capsules every night before I turn off my light."

Boucher, at the bridge table, laid down four cards, said, "That's game and rubber." He and the major appeared to have been reconciled.

"Sleeping powders give me a headache," said Essex. "Besides, I don't want to sleep."

Miss Day asked Imago, "Aren't you afraid you'll get a habit from taking them?"

"I ha-ave already."

They were adding up the score at the bridge table. Crane kept an eye on the major. He didn't want him to get away.

Essex asked, "But don't they give you a headache?"

"Never," said Imago Paraguay.

Crane started to move toward the bridge table. Imago asked him, "You ha-ave not forgotten our date?"

"Of course not," said Crane.

He caught the major in the hall. "I'd like to speak with you," he said.

"What about?"

"It's a private matter."

The major scowled at him. "Come to my room, then." Without waiting for Crane, he turned and went up the stairs.

AT a quarter to two O'Rourke came into their suite. He was surprised to see Crane. "Thought you'd gone to bed," he said. There was lipstick on the bosom of his shirt.

Crane was lying on his bed. He had taken off his coat and shoes. "I wish I had," he said. There was a half-filled bottle of whisky and a glass on a table beside the bed. He had been reading a copy of *Exciting Detective Tales*.

O'Rourke removed his coat, jerked off his black tie. "I'm going swimming . . . with Miss Day."

"In this thunderstorm?"

"The thunder's thirty miles off. The moon's out."

Crane got off the bed, looked out the French windows. The moon was to the right, low on the horizon. It was just above a bank of milky clouds.

"I'd go too," he said, "only I've got a date."

O'Rourke brought his trunks out of the bathroom. "Who with?"

"Imago."

"You better be careful she don't stick you with that little dagger."

"It isn't that kind of a date." Crane stared at the path the moon made across the black water. . . . "At least, I don't think so."

"These feel clammy," O'Rourke said, pulling up his trunks. "What did you find out from the major?"

"Nothing at all. Exactly nothing."

"What was he usin' the red ink for?"

"To balance the estate's books. He showed them to me."

"Was he tough?"

"No more than usual."

"Is he clear?"

"I'm afraid so."

"Maybe we'll get something on him later," said O'Rourke hopefully.

THERE was a distant growl of thunder. The wind seemed to be fresher; it rustled the palms and started the French window swinging shut. Crane stopped it before it slammed, said, "You better get going or there will be a storm."

O'Rourke had on his beach robe and an orange-and-white towel was draped over his arm. "Will you be needing all that whisky?" he asked.

"I guess not." Crane filled the tumbler, gave the bottle to O'Rourke. "Don't let Essex catch you."

O'Rourke grinned. "He's dead to the world. He's sleeping under a green

the clouds. The atmosphere was humid.

He went to his suitcase and took out an oustiti, an instrument shaped like an incredibly thin pair of pliers and designed to open locks with keys in them. He dropped this in his pocket and went back to Imago's room. He felt he would like to see the interior of her room and he had a good excuse for breaking in. If she was there he could explain that he had become alarmed when she failed to keep her appointment with him, had entered to make certain nothing had happened to her. Reaching the door, he knocked again. There was only silence. He dropped on one knee, deftly inserted the oustiti, unlocked the door.

Once inside, he bolted the door. Where was the light switch? He thought of using his flashlight, but decided that his appearance in the room would seem more innocent if he turned on the lights. His handkerchief-covered hand rubbed the wall, encountered the switch; he pushed the button.

On the double bed, a sheet pulled up

danger. Beside her, on a small table, was a thermos bottle, a glass half filled with water and a small box of white cardboard. He smelled of the thermos, then the glass. Both were odorless. He opened the box, his handkerchief still over his hand, and took out three of the dozen or so capsules inside. He opened these and smelled the gray powder with which they were filled. It was odorless. The label on the box read "Barbital." He frowned and looked at the dead woman.

Suicide? Would she kill herself? He didn't think so. The door had been locked from the inside, and the key had been in the lock. He looked out the French windows. From the balcony to the patio was an impossible jump. From the roof to the balcony was another long jump. No one could have come and gone that way. Back beside Imago's bed, he stared down at the body. He had an impulse to close the purple lids over the India-ink eyes, but he decided he'd better not touch her. It was a bad time to commit suicide, he thought, but how could anyone have gotten into the room to poison her?

With his handkerchief over his hand he lifted the box of barbital. She said she always took sleeping powders, and the half-filled glass was evidence she had this night. There were two small scars on the barbital box, almost as if someone had started to cut it with a pair of scissors. He wondered if a cyanide capsule had been slipped in with the barbital. That would be a way of murdering her, but not a very good one if the murderer was in a hurry. She might not come to the cyanide until the last two or three capsules; not for a week or so. No, suicide seemed the . . .

THERE was a gentle knocking at the door.

He stood absolutely motionless, holding his breath. His heart beat in his ears; his body was suddenly covered with goose flesh. He waited. At last he had to swallow to clear his throat so he could breathe.

The knocking was repeated. A low voice said:

"Imago."

He recognized the voice as that of Miss Langley. He kept as quiet as he was able, breathing through his open mouth. He was frightened.

"Imago," said Miss Langley, knocking again.

There was a long pause.

"All right," said Miss Langley.

He could hear the departing swish of her nightgown.

He found he was still grasping the box of barbital with his handkerchief. He put it back on the table. He pulled the sheet over Imago's body. He knew he'd better get out of there. He didn't want to try to explain just what he was doing in the room.

He took one last tour of the room. The door had been locked from the inside. With Essex's guards outside, he was confident no one could have reached the balcony from the roof or the patio. There was no other balcony near it. The bathroom window was locked from the inside. There was no window in the dressing room. He looked at the ceiling in the bedroom. It was calcimined white and there were only the four foot-square ventilators in the corners, just as in his room. There were absolutely no marks on the clean surface of the ceiling. He stared up at the ventilator over the bed. It would be impossible for anything larger than a monkey to come through that. Certainly nobody had come into the room through the ceiling.

The clock read 3:05. He'd better be going. On his way to the door he paused beside the dancer's body. Her face was strange under the soft light. It was like the face of an Asiatic doll: fragile, serene



"Haven't you anything that will work in the daytime?"

WILLIAM VON RIEGEN

blanket on the couch in the library."

Alone again, Crane glanced at his watch. It was nearly two. He sat on the bed and pulled on his shoes. He tied his black bow tie and put on his coat. He drank about a quarter of the glass of whisky, then had a water chaser out of the thermos by his bed. He felt pretty good.

He left the rest of the liquor for a nightcap, and went out into the hall and found Imago's door and knocked softly. He knocked again. Then again. There was no answer. He waited fully two minutes, then, for the fourth time, knocked. No reply. He went back to his room and sat on the bed. She had definitely said she would see him at two o'clock and he felt slightly angry. He drank about half the remaining whisky in the glass and debated whether he should go to bed.

Off in the distance the storm snarled and growled and broad flashes of lightning fitfully illuminated the pale cloud banks. The sea looked ink-black beside

to one creamy shoulder, lay Imago Paraguay. Her black hair clung to the pillow beside her, like a smudge of soot on snow. He looked at the electric clock on the table beside her and saw that it was twenty minutes to three. He moved closer to the bed and glanced down at her face. She was lying on her back and her ebony-black eyes were wide open. Her skin, usually pale ivory, was the color of claret wine. Startled, he touched her bare shoulder, then shook it violently. It didn't do any good. She was dead!

HIS first thought was of flight. He'd be in a jam if anyone found him in the room. It would make a really fine scandal. He started for the door, then halted. The unnatural flush of Imago's skin stirred his memory. He went back to the bed, knelt on the floor and put his nose to her cerise lips. There was a faint bitter odor. It reminded him of almonds. Cyanide of potassium!

His surprise made him forget his own

and impassive; cold and inhuman. He resisted an impulse to close her eyes. He let himself out the door, then locked it with his oustiti, and hurried down the corridor to his room.

O'ROURKE shook him, said, "Wake up, Bill." Excitement made his voice high. "Wake up. Things have happened."

Crane's mouth tasted as though he had held threepenny nails in it all night. His head ached. He did not feel at all well.

"Come on." O'Rourke pulled him to a sitting position. "Listen: Imago Paraguay is dead."

Crane sank back on the pillow.

"You hear me?" O'Rourke asked. "Imago Paraguay is . . ."

"I hear you." Crane closed his eyes.

There was a pause. Then O'Rourke said, "You knew it already. You didn't talk with her?"

"No."

"You didn't knock her off?"

Crane opened one eye. "Do they say she was knocked off?"

"No. The cops think she took poison."

Last night's storm had roused the surf. It wasn't heavy, but it was coming in fast, making a hissing noise.

"Were you there right after she killed herself?" O'Rourke asked.

"I don't know."

While Crane took a bath and shaved,

O'Rourke described the discovery of the body. Miss Langley couldn't get an answer to her knocking, had one of the servants break open the door, he said, and found the body. Her screams woke the household. So far the theory was suicide, although a careful search had been made of the room.

There was another piece of news, O'Rourke continued: from di Gregario. Eddie Burns had called to say the count had again given them the slip during the night, but they had learned he was in Key West. Williams was now flying there on a plane to pick him up.

"Those guys are swell shadows," said Crane.

"It's tough to hang onto somebody day and night," O'Rourke said.

"I suppose so." Crane let hot water run over a washcloth. "Anyway, I'll go to Key West, too."

"To see di Gregario?"

Crane pressed the dripping cloth against his face. "Yeah."

"You think he and Imago are connected in some way?"

"It's possible. Maybe they put on all that cat-and-dog stuff for our benefit."

"I get the idea." O'Rourke was leaning against the bathroom door. "She put the finger on Camelia Essex for di Gregario, then killed herself in remorse."

"She was killed."

"How do you figure that?"

Crane pretended to be mysterious. He put his finger to his lips. "It came as a revelation." As he put on the coat to his double-breasted linen suit, O'Rourke asked, "When do we start?"

"You aren't going." Crane adjusted his brown tie. "I wouldn't think of tearing you away from Miss Day."

"Miss Day won't give a damn today," said O'Rourke.

"Why not?"

"She's going to be a cripple, unless she's tougher than I think." O'Rourke smiled reminiscently. "After we had a swim and polished off the whisky I took her up to her room. She was locked out, so we went in by way of Essex's room. In that sort of dressing room, just past the bathroom, she fell over a chair and almost broke her neck."

"WELL, you can't go anyway." Crane got his panama from the closet shelf. "I got a job for you in Miami."

He told O'Rourke that he wanted to know if Imago's check for one thousand dollars had been found either in Tortoni's bank or among his effects. "See if you can find out how well they knew each other," he added.

"Okay," said O'Rourke. "Now how about a spot of breakfast?"

"Breakfast!" said Crane. "I'm never going to eat again."

(To be continued next week)

Dressed to Thrill

Continued from page 13

rayon. Wear with it that big thick-brimmed, rough straw sailor from the fashion show, in a dark color with enormous matching straw handbag. For the newest thing in shoes, pluck from the show, too, that pump with anklet strap. You'll be dressed for tea, the races, a concert, for everything short of active sports or a formal affair—for now, for spring, for summer.

Our number two is a version of another all-American favorite, the shirt-waist dress. It's more feminine than the strictly man-tailored sports dress, but entirely functional for all that, gored to fit through the middle and flare slightly. Try it in hop sacking, the big fabric of the year, a refined peasant weave that resists crushing. You can wear it with the same big hat and bag, but for shoes try that comfortable but gay walking shoe that rises to a point front and back. It comes in three heel heights to suit all feet and occasions, and goes with anything, making it a perfect shoe for traveling light.

Number three can crop up in your wardrobe in many versions. Basically, it is a pleated skirt with fitted, hip-length—or longer—jumper top. For informal tennis, wear it with bright red jersey skirt flaring to the knee, the pleats stitched along the edge to hold them in, bright yellow jumper cut just to cap the shoulders—or on the beach with startling clogs sporting three-inch soles, as it appears on the Fashion Futures runway. Wear it now under your winter coat with long sleeves. Wear it in chiffon or silk jersey or crepe, with long skirt and maybe heavily beaded or shirred jumper, for dinner and dancing. Play many tunes on it.

The length of these daytime skirts is a matter best decided by you and your height and the turn of your calf, but the general tendency is on the short side—fourteen inches and up from the ground. Shoulders are gently squared, no obvious puffs and tricks. Sleeves are all lengths, those just below the elbow being especially feminine and fetching.

A fourth dress that you will see—and wear of course—in many versions is the

dirndl in cotton print, more popular now than ever. The fullness is now gathered into the sides, giving a slim effect fore and aft. It's at its gayest in the knee-length play dress buttoning down the front over matching shorts and brassiere that will pinch-hit as a bathing suit if need be.

In this version it joins the Fashion Futures parade in a flock of play suits and beach wear from New York and California, gone completely feminine and colorful. Lipstick red, clear yellow, mulberry combined with pink, vivid color from Mexico, sharp color combinations are the rule, in monotone or brilliant prints or stripes—especially stripes, from Roman to pin stripes.

For Beach, Boat and Back Yard

There isn't a suit in the lot that doesn't hug the diaphragm and lift the bosom. Variety begins from there in swim suits, with knitted maillots, printed cotton flaring like brief little tunics, sleek printed satin. Most are one-piece, or two-piece with a slight interlude in the middle, but some go on for three and four pieces—shorts, a brief gesture of a brassiere for strenuous swimming and sunning, a modest one to cover up when the patrol comes around, and a long skirt to tie about your middle or use as a cape. Most striking in bold, many-colored stripes.

Play suits for games on shipboard or at the beach—or in your own back yard—have skirts to the knee or short fitted coats over shorts and halter. That old favorite is back, one-piece shorts with matching or contrasting skirt to button on. Sunback dresses go with brief boleros.

But when you get down to serious sport you'll want the classical sports clothes for which America, the land of sports for everyone, is famous. Action backs, golf skirts built to your stance, pleated tennis skirts to the knee—everything built exactly for its purpose, and therefore a classic from year to year. Fashion Futures flashes them in fabrics that have been woven to be crush-re-

sistant, water-repellent, treated to be nonshrinkable, nonfading—attentions you can demand for all your clothes now.

Slacks will play an active part in your wardrobe, too, there being nothing more shipshape for the deck of a sailboat and for resort life all day long. But take a good look at yourself in them first, and be sure they are tailored to your girlish form with the perfection achieved in California, where they are practically a uniform.

The newest trick in evening clothes, and the best for the girl who wants to travel far and light, is the slim separate skirt, ankle or instep length, worn with all variety of tops. For a very formal evening, it can be a very naked halter top, matching or contrasting. For an informal evening at home or a resort, it can be an effective blouse from your suit collection. In its very newest version it is a fitted jumper (hark back to our number-three dress)—in fine cotton lisle like a sweater, silk jersey or the most elegant fabric your heart desires. This jumper keeps appearing, from sports to evening, so keep an eye on it.

Tiny boleros over a blouse, little fitted jackets, straight boxy coats will also play changes on your evening costume. A jacket in bright jersey with a gay edging can appear with gray slacks, too, or a black skirt.

A smart girl weaves her wardrobe together this way with well-calculated jackets, making half a dozen costumes sprout where only two or three grew before. She buys her shoes cannily, to look uncompromisingly well with several outfits. She likes dashing accessories, but chooses at least one set to carry through seasons and many occasions. She gets all the new and silly hats she wants, but is sure of one like that dark rough straw sailor, in its most becoming size, that will dress up many costumes, and plus a few easily packed caps and scarves and berets that will see her all around the world, or off for a week end. She's all set for a gay life at home or, at the drop of a hat, to scoop things into a suitcase and be on her way.

WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU HAVE A COLD



IF YOU'RE nursing a cold—see a doctor! Curing a cold is the doctor's business. But the doctor himself will tell you that a regular movement of the bowels will help to shorten the duration of a cold. Remember, also, that it will do much to make you less susceptible to colds.

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PERTUSSIN

Charming Young Man

Continued from page 23

sober—nothing if he was drunk. Niven tried to catch him when he was drunk but he didn't have any luck. The tonsils became so rebellious that he had to go for the ten-dollar job. It wasn't a very good job. In fact, a few weeks later he had to go to a real hospital for a retake.

"Lucky break for me, that was," Niven says thoughtfully. "There I was in a hospital wondering how I could bail myself out. I didn't have a nickel even to buy a newspaper. So I read the books that were lying around the hospital."

He found one book that seemed interesting. It was called Fox Hunting in Canada. Of course he had never been fox hunting in Canada but that didn't matter. He wrote three articles about fox hunting and sent them to a Canadian newspaper. The newspaper bought the three articles and sent a check by return mail. It arrived the day he was discharged and it not only paid his hospital bills but left him train fare to New York.

Of course he registered at the most expensive hotel in town. Where else would an officer and a gentleman stay? His clothes were excellent, his manners impeccable and his charm infectious. He soon became acquainted and became a habitu  of our best saloons, which in New York are called "clubs." These saloons attract the very best people but it was not the distinguished clientele which attracted young Niven. It was the quaint habit even the best saloons have of leaving pretzel bowls at one end of the bar. He could buy one beer and eat quite heartily. He met a lot of nice people but he could accept dinner invitations only from those who lived within walking distance of his hotel.

"I used to die many deaths at those dinners," he says, "hoping that the hostess wouldn't ask me to take some girl home. When this happened I would always say as gaily as I could, 'What a

night. A beautiful night. What fun it would be to walk home.'"

About this time Niven (he was only twenty-five, mind you) fell in with Lefty Flynn and Douglas Hertz, who was, of all things, an English cowboy. They had a grandiloquent scheme that would make them all millions. It was, in brief, indoor horse racing. They garnered a lot of tired polo ponies and rented an arena at Atlantic City; the races lasted fifteen minutes each, which was a bit wearing on horses, jockeys and customers. But the customers didn't mind because there weren't many of them present. They were walking along the boardwalk or playing skee ball or eating popcorn. They weren't in the arena.

A Battleship Stowaway

"We had a nice layout," Niven says gloomily, "and I don't understand yet why it didn't go. We even dressed a couple of cowboys up in white clothes and made them doctors. We had a hospital in the middle of the arena. It wasn't much of a hospital but I managed to borrow a large electric hair dryer and that looked very surgical. It was the only equipment we had. Finally we gave up. There we were, the three of us, with 120 punch-drunk ponies who looked very weary from their fifteen-minute races.

A month later Niven found himself in Cuba, and he isn't quite sure yet how he got there. There was a revolution going on and he wanted to join one side or another. But the British consul heard of it and put his foot down. When you resign from the British Army you sign a paper saying you will not bear arms for any other country during the next five years.

"One day I woke up, looked at myself and said, 'Hey, you. What are you train-

ing to be, a first-class bum?'" Niven sighed. "I was twenty-five and feeling quite old. I thought I'd had enough of just tearing around living as best I could. I'd go back to England and settle down. I managed to get a job on a Japanese freighter called the Nanking Maru, which was headed for Norway. That seemed a step nearer home."

That night before the Nanking Maru was scheduled to sail, the American battleship S. S. Oklahoma sailed into Havana harbor. The sight of those marine uniforms made Niven a bit homesick for the army. He had a few drinks with some of the sailors and marines and they got along fine, too.

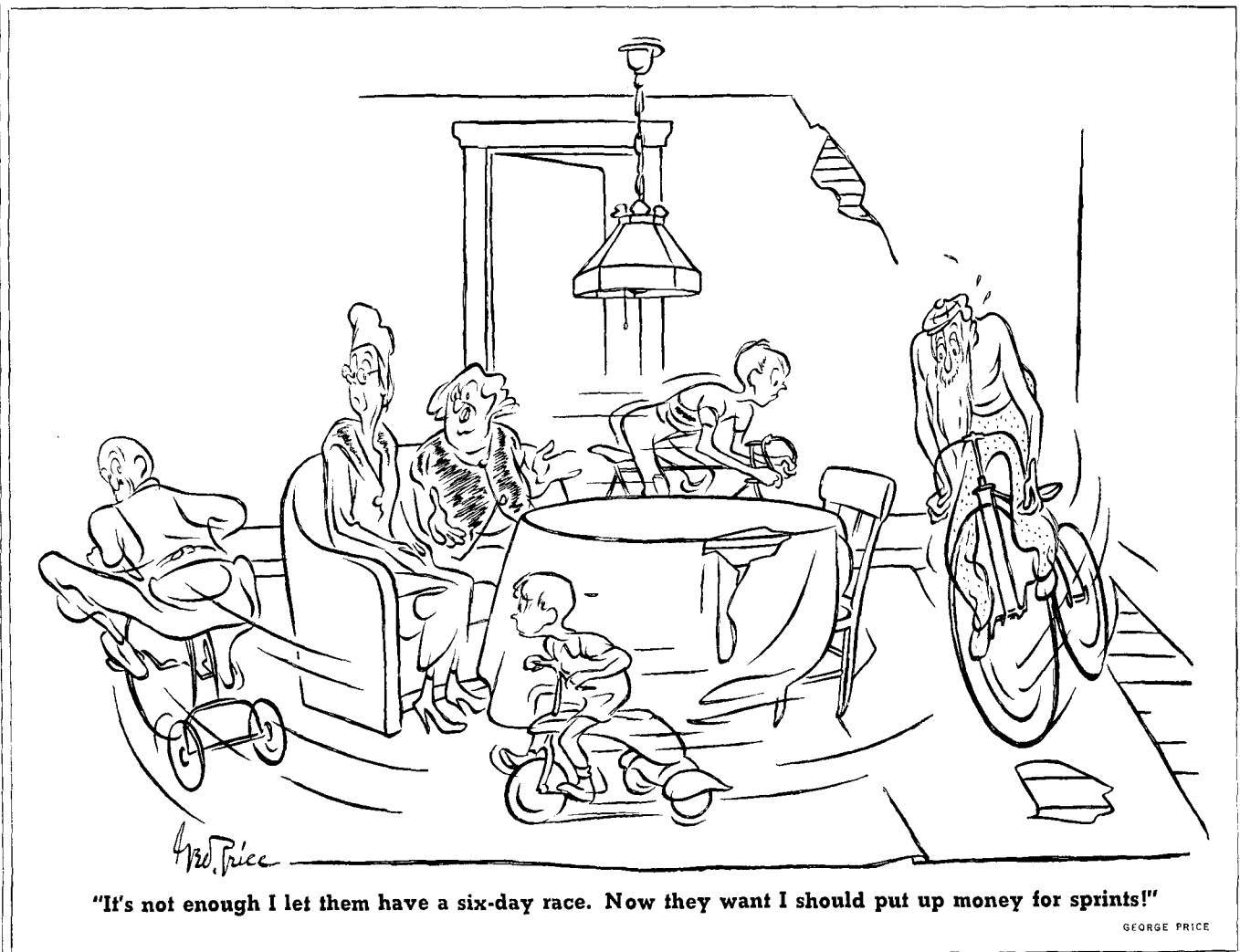
When he woke up it was in the bunk of a Japanese freighter and he was very thankful to his sailor friends. That is, until some hours later when he asked a shipmate how long it would be before they reached Norway.

"Ye're batty, mate," his pal told him. "We ain't goin' nowhere near Norway. We're headin' for Frisco."

It developed that he was on the wrong Japanese freighter. He was on the Yatsu Maru, headed for San Francisco. Well, he'd never been to San Francisco.

He was getting nearer to his destiny but, sweating under Caribbean skies, he didn't know that. San Francisco looked very formidable. He knew some people casually who lived in Santa Barbara and he went to visit them. They told him about a place called Hollywood, where charming young men could often get jobs. He went to Hollywood.

"I wanted a job at anything," he says now. "I had no idea of being an actor. I just wanted a job. I made the rounds of the studios and every one was closed to me. It was the old story of an unknown trying to crash the studio gates. It practically can't be done. I tried—how I tried—but I couldn't do it."



"It's not enough I let them have a six-day race. Now they want I should put up money for sprints!"

GEORGE PRICE

He went back to San Francisco pretty discouraged and then one afternoon he looked out in the harbor and there was a beautiful thing lying out there. It was H. M. S. Norfolk, a ship which had spent a lot of time at Malta. He knew every officer on board from the admiral down. In an hour his feet were on her deck and he was greeting old friends and for the moment everything was all right. The ship was leaving that evening to help in a promotion stunt. They were arousing interest in a picture which was to be called *Mutiny on the Bounty*. They thought it would be a good stunt to take newsreels of the *Bounty* and the modern British man-o'-war. Young Niven stayed on board and the Norfolk put to sea. Twenty miles off Los Angeles they met the *Bounty*. Everything went as scheduled until a rather be-draggled figure climbed down a rope ladder from the towering deck of the Norfolk to land on the tiny deck of the *Bounty*, which had been tied up to the man-o'-war.

Then the Norfolk steamed away and there was David Niven standing before a bewildered group of film actors. Frank Lloyd, the director, was intrigued. He liked the looks of young Niven and he liked the nerve of him. There was a publicity man around somewhere and he, too, was delighted.

"Great stunt," he chortled. "Couldn't have staged it better myself. Stowaway on battleship crashes Hollywood via the water route."

Niven just wanted a job, he told Lloyd. He'd do anything. When they arrived in port, Lloyd took Niven under his wing.

"It was a lot of fun driving through the same M-G-M gate that had been so tightly closed to me a few days before," Niven says. "It looked as though all my troubles were over. Lloyd arranged for me to make a test the next day."

Now it looked as though everything was all right until from nowhere and without the slightest warning the immigration officials fell upon him. He would have to leave the country immediately. There was nothing to do but scurry to Mexico. He went to Mexicali and spent six weeks there before he was allowed back.

Goldwyn's "Discovery"

It seemed as if everyone had forgotten him during those six weeks. Help came when he needed it most, from Sally Blane, whom he had known in London. Sally then lived with her two sisters, Loretta Young and Polly Ann, and their mother presided over their household. The mother felt sorry for young David and insisted that he move in until he got on his feet.

"They are the four most wonderful women in the world," Niven says with a touch of awe in his voice. "I was broke and had no prospects and yet they took care of me as though I were a member of the family. Nothing I can ever do will be adequate payment for what they did for me. Through them I met everyone in Hollywood, but for a long time it didn't do any good."

Yes, he'd meet everyone and be invited for dinner but not to the studio.

"I wanted to be an extra but all they'd let me be was an extra man," Niven says a little bitterly. "That is, until I met Sam Goldwyn."

Of the many, many legends which have grown up around Goldwyn there is one which is undoubtedly true—he is the smartest man in Hollywood. This legend persists and grows stronger because of the testimony of those who work for the man. Take young Niven now.

"I met Goldwyn at a dinner party and I said in desperation, 'Will you look at a test of mine?'" Niven tells it. "Goldwyn said, 'Sure, send it to me in the

morning.' So I sent him that first test—I'd made seven since then. I sent him the one where I swore at that director, and Goldwyn called me right into his office and said, 'Here's a seven-year contract.'"

It was that easy once you got the break. Niven was dazed at Goldwyn's quick action.

"I'm not giving you much money," Goldwyn told him. "But as soon as you're worth more I'll tear this contract up and write a new one. Now run around to other studios and get some experience. Take any kind of part you can get."

Now it was noised around that Niven was a "discovery" of Goldwyn's who could be "borrowed." The same people who wouldn't let Niven into their offices now offered him parts.

Learning to Act

In his first picture he said, "All right," to Miriam Hopkins. In his second he had a better part. He said, "Goodbye, my dear," to Elissa Landi. Then he was given a real part and his first comedy scene. It was in *Feather in Your Hat*, which was directed by Al Santell. His first scene, the first time he had ever been before a camera except as one of a mob, was a difficult one and it was shot at eight in the morning.

"I had to make a gay, laughing entrance and make some witty remarks," Niven says. "That's a tough thing to do at eight in the morning and I was scared stiff. Well, I came on the set, said my lines, and there was a roar of spontaneous laughter from the cast, the electricians, stage hands and director."

The kid stood there amazed. He had made this whole bunch laugh right out loud. He'd stopped the show.

Santell said, laughing, "David, that was great. You can certainly put a comedy scene over. Now let's make another take just for fun. That first one was great, though. That's the one we'll use."

All of his nervousness left him. Now he was a troupier. That laughter had given him a confidence which has never left him. It didn't even leave him when he heard the real story of that spontaneous laughter which had greeted his scene.

"I heard it days later," Niven says. "Santell knew this was really my first opportunity to say lines. It was my first real scene and he knew that I'd be nervous. He got the whole cast together and told them to give out with that laughter when I had finished. He knew it would give me confidence."

From then on everything was all right. He appeared in twelve pictures with increasingly larger parts. He was in such pictures as *Dodsworth*, *Thank You Jeeves*, *Beloved Enemy*, *Charge of the Light Brigade* and of course *The Prisoner of Zenda*, which moved him into the front rank. Every now and then Goldwyn would call him into the office, tear up the old contract and give him a new one.

"I'll always pay you what you're worth to me," Goldwyn said, and he kept his word.

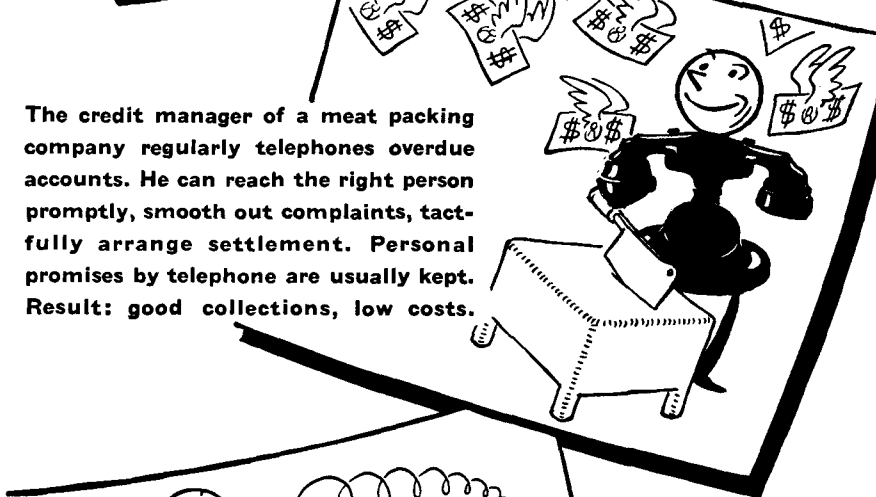
That's David Niven, a charming young man who would rather speak about those who have helped him than he would about himself. He will speak for hours about how he learned about acting from Ronald Colman, of how he watched every move Colman made in *The Prisoner of Zenda*. He will tell of the good advice Colman gives him when he is puzzled about how to do a scene. He'll talk of Goldwyn's fair dealing and he'll tell of directors who gave him a hand. From now on his story promises to be dull. It will be the climax of a success story. His real story was all told before he met success and made it his own.

Tabloid Telephone Tales

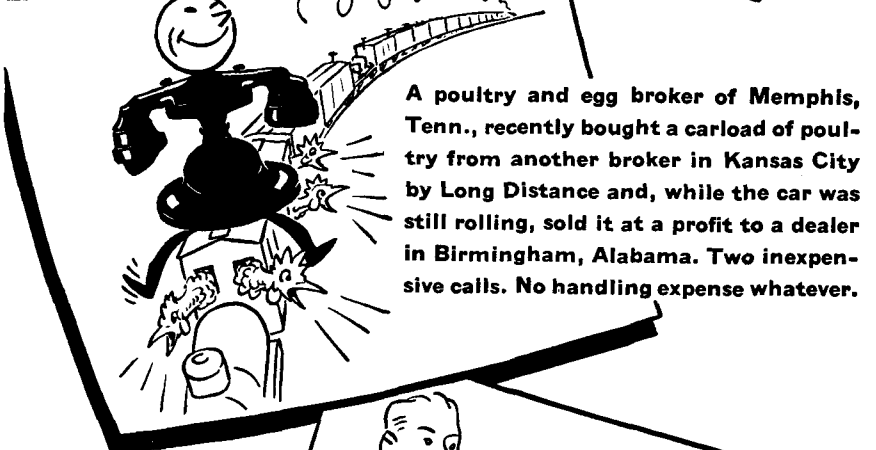
Brief stories of how Long Distance is ringing the bell for businesses of all sorts and sizes



An eastern wholesaler of toys and novelties wanted bigger attendance at traveling displays, tried telephoning buyers in surrounding territory from key towns. On one trip, 350 telephone invitations brought 100 customers to sample room. Sales were \$9000. Telephone cost was \$75.



The credit manager of a meat packing company regularly telephones overdue accounts. He can reach the right person promptly, smooth out complaints, tactfully arrange settlement. Personal promises by telephone are usually kept. Result: good collections, low costs.



A poultry and egg broker of Memphis, Tenn., recently bought a carload of poultry from another broker in Kansas City by Long Distance and, while the car was still rolling, sold it at a profit to a dealer in Birmingham, Alabama. Two inexpensive calls. No handling expense whatever.



A printing company of Atlanta, Georgia, called a New York buyer who had never heard of their service, talked to him twice in New York and once in Washington at a total telephone cost of \$14.45—and secured a printing order of \$2700 by this Long Distance introduction.





We Want Service

IF THE building industry is to play the vital part it ought to play in our economic system, it must do it in the characteristic American way. It must develop the American genius for efficient and large-scale production."

President Franklin Delano Roosevelt expressed this opinion in his recent message on housing plans. The same day Homer S. Cummings, Mr. Roosevelt's attorney general, talking to an assemblage of grocers and other businessmen, said something quite different: "Unless we destroy monopoly, monopoly will find ways to destroy most of our reforms and, in the end, lower the standard of our common life."

Large-scale production and monopoly are, of course, not the same—except in the minds of some politicians. Mr. Cummings actually was deploring large-scale production, as the figures he cited showed.

So these two statements, one by the President and the other by his chief law officer, reflect a wide divergence of judgment. The President wants Congress to encourage the building industry to become large and efficient. Mr. Cummings says, "Beware of monopoly, lest it lower your standard of living."

The only enduring monopolies in this country are those specifically created by law. Patents granted on inventions set up monopolies. Legislatures and Congresses grant franchises to public utilities. These create monopolies for public convenience.

The political talk concerns large-scale production and not actual monopolies based on patents or franchises. Monopoly is just a fat political word which arouses emotions but makes little sense when examined closely.

Politically it is popular now, and it has always been popular, to denounce the large size of business organizations. We have had endless political campaigns aimed at corporations, trusts, mergers, combines, holding companies and all other forms of organization.

We have had anticorporation laws, antitrust laws, antimonopoly laws in endless variety. Political reputations have been built upon a foundation of anti-big-business propaganda. William Jennings Bryan's Cross of Gold speech upon this theme made him three times Democratic candidate for the presidency.

Plainly it is good politics to deplore the growth of business units and to view with pain the threat of monopoly. On the other hand, the relatively high standard of living which Americans have enjoyed is, in fact, the product of efficient large-scale business. It is also good politics to point with pride at this American standard of living and to promise to use the full force of the government to keep it high.

So we have business laws which attempt to make a compromise between opposite principles. We once agreed that trusts must be destroyed but we must apply a rule of reason before destroying them. More recently, under the NRA, we decided to permit corporations and industries to make various kinds of agreements which had been denounced as crimes in the earlier antitrust acts. Once the Supreme Court decided that the NRA was unconstitutional, we began to indict and prosecute men charged with continuing to do after the end of the NRA what they had been compelled by the law to do while the NRA lasted. Political winds blow from various directions.

Our land was naturally so rich and, as a nation, Americans have been so inventive and so energetic that we have been enabled to survive the most prodigious blunders. Sometime, however, perhaps even now, we must make up our minds just what we want.

We shall almost surely not have to choose between big business and small business. We can and do have both. Contrary to many of our political traditions, we do not have to penalize one form of organization to retain the other.

The sure and permanent rule is that we will surrender almost anything before we consent

to lower our standard of living. If a large-scale, efficient industry is necessary to a high standard of living, then we are going to have large-scale, efficient business regardless of Homer Cummings' fears about monopolies.

A high standard of living consists of desirable commodities and coveted services. People who once enjoy them or even see better things in prospect will fight to gain and retain what they desire. Shiny new motorcars, beauty-shop service, silk stockings, becoming clothes, among other things, are the necessities or luxuries a people will not lightly surrender.

The real confusion concerning a proper public policy toward controlling the size of business comes out of our continued ignorance of definite facts concerning the problem. Politicians make statements, orators give off speeches and Congresses improvise laws but nobody representing the public interest is willing to gather the complex information essential to a fair understanding of the issue at stake.

President Roosevelt suggests that large-scale enterprise might revive construction and so stimulate all industry. Nobody knows, however, at just what size industry becomes most efficient and most useful to the public welfare.

Apparently industries vary. In steel and petroleum large-scale enterprise plays the largest role but small manufacturing establishments are exceedingly numerous and many are very efficient. The man of energy and initiative is still able to start and to continue a small business in many lines. The service establishments tend to be small.

What we require more than anything else is an unprejudiced understanding of widely ramified organizations. If we could persuade ourselves to consider this matter of efficient and useful size as medical men approach a disease, we might hope for solutions as sound and as enduring. Certainly no one is wise enough to improvise an answer to our largest problem of industry and politics.

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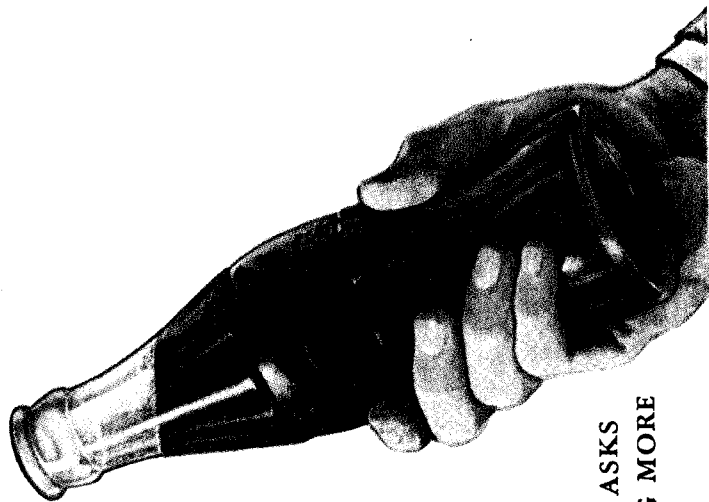
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